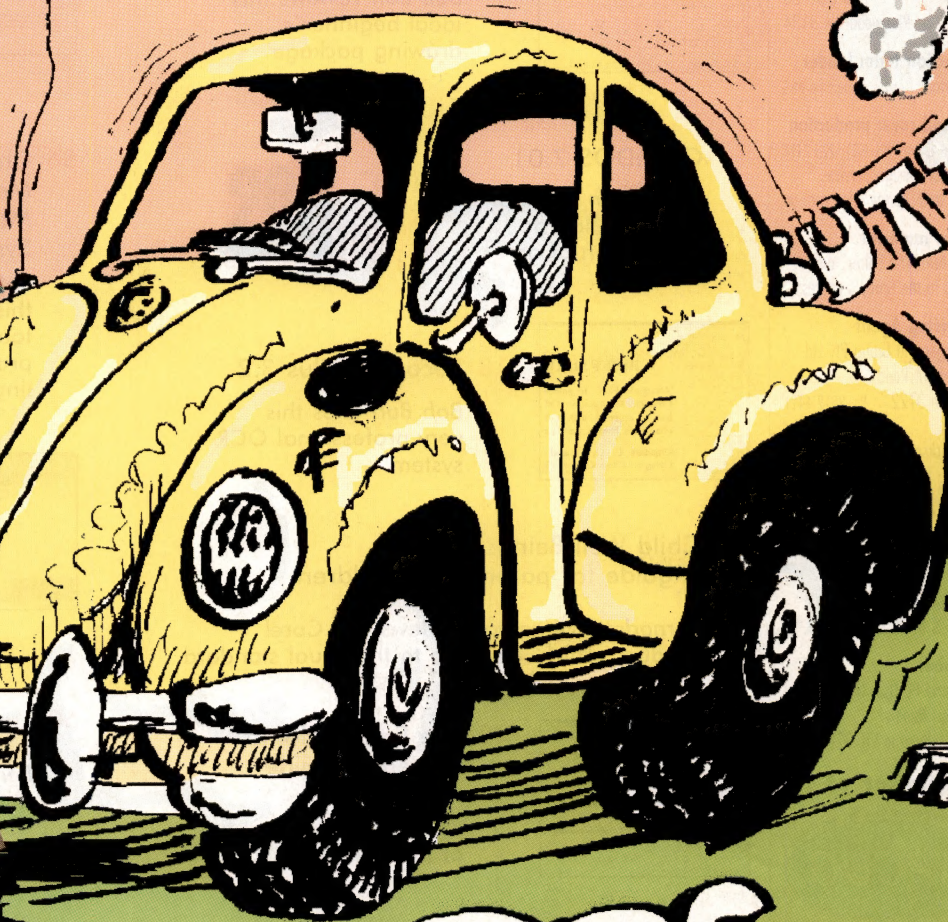
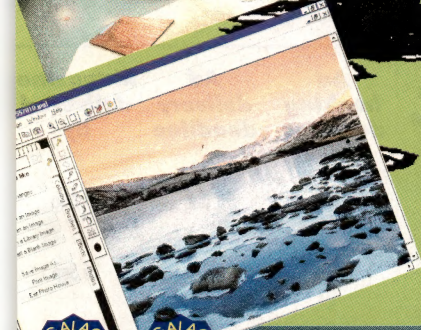
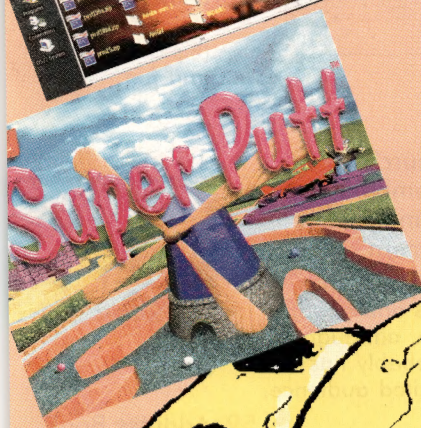


PC Update

August 1997

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Systems



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DOS

FEATURES

Catching up with OS/2 Warp
Dial-Up Networking in NT 4.0 Workstation
Monitoring Windows Software installation
The Andrew User Interface System
Plus **REVIEWS** and much much more

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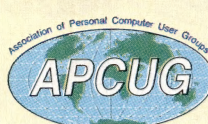
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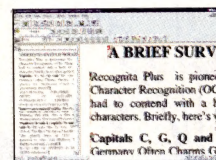
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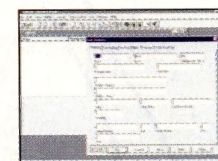
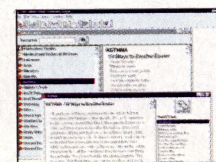


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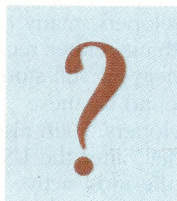
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	Forthcoming PC Update themes	Articles deadline	Ad booking deadline	Ad delivery deadline	Magazine delivered by
September	PCs and the Professions (Financial, Legal, Architecture, Medical, etc.)	4 Aug	6 Aug	8 Aug	29 Aug
October	Upgrading	1 Sep	3 Sep	5 Sep	26 Sep
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(PAP dialing only, up to 120 minutes total, per day)
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Home Page

<http://www.melbpc.org.au>

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PC Update, August 1997

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Graphics. Supply graphics or screen shots, wherever possible, as colour, or black and white images, saved in one of the formats: PCX, BMP, TIF, WMF or EPS.

Rejections. Contact the editor if your submission is not published within four issues. Articles with long file names, self-extracting files or virus infections are rejected without notification. Other rejections are advised by phone or in writing.

WORKING WRITER'S WORDS

Carol Daniels



You learn something new every day, but only if you pay attention. That's one of my favourite sayings. I don't remember when I wrote it, or why. It's stuck with me though. The first part is easy. The second part can be difficult. It reminds me that things are not always as they seem, and that sometimes you have to stick with something if you want to understand what it's really all about.

For instance, not long ago I wrote to a fellow member about "Users Helping Users" a philosophy at the heart, not just of Melb PC, but of user groups all over the world.

Anyone who knows me, even if only by reputation, knows that I can (and do) say controversial things (often on purpose). Not in my wildest imagination did I think "Users Helping Users" would be one of them. For me, this is such a basic concept, that I expected it would be universally known and understood.

To my surprise the recipient had never heard of the concept. In fact, it was so foreign to him, he implied that I was making it up!

To say that I was astounded would be the understatement of the year. The more I thought about it the less sense it made. How I wondered, could a member not know something this fundamental?

That's where the second part of my favourite saying comes into play (the paying attention part). The lesson from that exchange wasn't about one member not knowing, but that if one member didn't know there had to be more in the same boat, for whatever reason.

I'm sure that's one reason for confusion when someone comments that "Melb PC is a volunteer organisation". Saying that "it's a volunteer organisation" isn't a way to avoid responsibility. It's a description of members' relationships with each other. We are a group of users of personal computers that have joined together for our mutual benefit. That is the basis of our community.

It's not just our "little" community either. It's a world-wide community. Although some Melb PC members only have regular contact with their fellow Melb PCers, some of us communicate with members of user groups from

around the world, including some not so far away.

Just the other day I heard from Steven Byrne, a member of PC User Group, Canberra, and the webmaster of a new web site designed to highlight the efforts of local Australian developers of shareware, freeware and other downloadable software.

It was timely news, one of our members had just asked me if I could suggest ways his son could promote his new shareware game. I passed the information along and had a look at the site myself. It's well designed, and I think the number and variety of programs there will surprise some visitors.

According to Steven, the Ganggang site <http://www.ganggang.com.au> features more than 850 applications from more than 380 local authors (including about 70 Victorian developers) in 78 categories, for all platforms. And all listings are rated, reviewed and have download links. Steven figures that's just 30% of what's out there. He's finding more programs every day. I know he'd be glad to hear from Melb PC software developers who want to have their programs listed.

Steven says, "At this rate, by year's end we might have 1500 Aussie applications listed. Who would have guessed it were possible? It highlights the innovation and creativity of local developers, many of them young 20-somethings either recently graduated from university or still studying."

"Now that I have found all these applications and developers, I am also beginning to realise that, after the US, Australia is probably the most active producer of shareware in the world. Think about it—how many Canadian shareware applications, have you heard of recently, or French, English or German for that matter. But go to your nearest TUCOWS site, and you won't have any trouble turning up a whole bunch of Aussie applications. Strange but true."

If you're looking for something specific, or just looking around, check the Melb PC BBS first. When you find a goodie on the Ganggang site, be sure to upload it to our BBS. Remember, "Users Helping Users".

There are innumerable ways for people to chip in and help; not all require extensive technical knowledge. Those

users helping

users — such a

basic concept

that do are led by people from whom you can learn. How many times have you thought, "that's a good idea, I wonder why no one has..." Ideas need champions to turn into actions.

To the members who write to complain about my constant badgering, every time I bring up the subject, you're going to have to get used to it, or ignore it. Because I'm not going to stop. In fact, I'm going to be encouraging others to talk (and write) about it too. It is the most effective way to remind all of us about, "Users Helping Users".

While I'm at it, I'll give my regular plug on members' submissions for *PC Update*. We've had a nice trickle of new authors this year. But we always need more.

About this issue, and issues to come

Last year the operating systems theme didn't have many takers. This year I'm happy to this theme had more submissions than any other (so far).

I hope that as I write this editorial, there are more than a few professionals scribbling away for the September issue (the theme is PCs and the professions). It's not too early to start writing for the October issue either. I know there are lots of happy and sad tales about upgrading out there.

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Catching up with OS/2 Warp

OPERATING SYSTEMS

Mark A Rogers

to use all

the features

I recommend

a Pentium 100

with 32 MB RAM

Late in 1996, IBM released OS/2 Warp version 4 (OSW4) onto the unsuspecting public. This version, while building on the strengths of previous versions, introduces a new direction for IBM's most popular operating system.

Many of the features we know and love about OS/2 are still there. The object oriented desktop is now even more user friendly, as it now sports a tool bar called the WarpCenter. It enables you to open files and programs in the familiar Win 95 way, as well as enabling you to create trays of your most regularly used programs. The WarpCenter also features a drives monitor which enables you to see the available space on your drives, which can also be turned into an activity monitor. There are also quick buttons for the window list, lookup feature, search tool, and system shutdown. A system clock is also found on it, which may be turned into a stop watch or a date display. The last section of the WarpCenter features Warp Guides. These are wizard-like utilities that can guide you through common system tasks.

The program and folder views have been enhanced. As well as being more attractive, the views include a new close button on the window frame, similar to that found in Windows 95 and UNIX

systems. The icons have also been redesigned, they are more meaningful and have a more 3D look.

If you enjoyed customising the look and feel of your OS/2 desktop, Warp 4 will not disappoint. It comes with a greater variety of system schemes, and introduces a new concept of sound schemes. With the colour schemes you can set a default look and feel across your OS/2 desktop and all your folders. Of course, setting a default, doesn't stop you from customising individual folders for colours and background bitmaps. OSW4 now supports both ATM and True Type fonts directly, these can be configured on a folder-by-folder basis if required.

The sound schemes give you a choice of four different ways for your OS/2 system to give audible feedback to you. You are also free to create your own if the urge takes you.

Installation

The installation procedure for OSW4 has also been improved, though it is still not quite up to the standard provided by Win 95 or NT. This version of OSW4 however does support "Plug and Play" devices, including PCMCIA cards. OS/2 should be installable on the majority of hardware systems available, as it comes with a wide variety of device drivers.

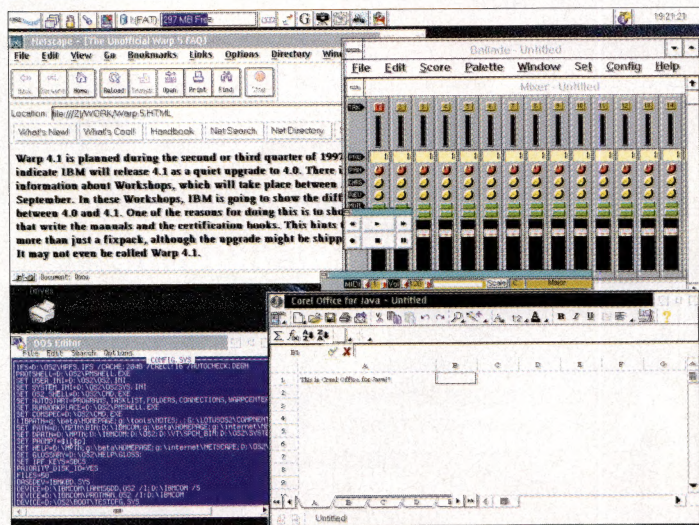
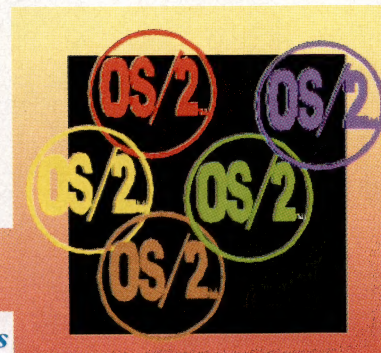


Figure 1. OS/2 Warp 4, the best way to run DOS, Windows 3.x, OS/2 and Java applications

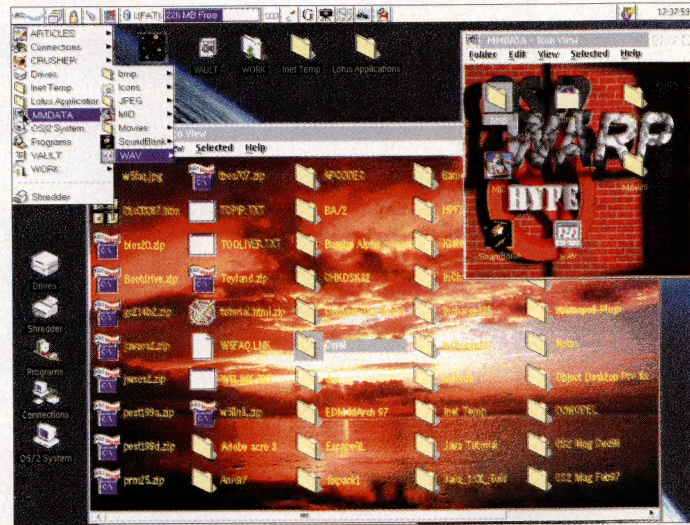


Figure 2. The desktop now includes the new WarpCenter

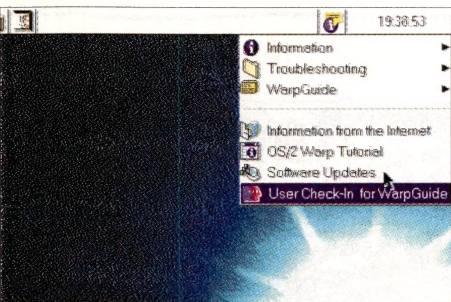


Figure 3. Retrieve updates and fixes automatically over the Internet

Running DOS and Windows applications under OS/2

OS/2 Warp 4 is even better at running DOS and Windows 3.x applications. Further enhancement to the virtual DOS machine has made OS/2 extremely versatile at running most current DOS applications, including games. Its support of Windows applications has improved, with the ability to run Windows 3.x applications and many Win32S applications, up to v1.25 of the specification. OS/2 cannot run Win 95 or NT applications directly.

IBM has instead focused OS/2 on a new vision of computing, that of Java and the networked world. Included with OS/2 is the Java Virtual Machine v1.01. By the time you read this you will be able to download the 1.1 version of the virtual

machine from the Internet. Java promises many things, amongst them the ability to write an application once and have it run on different hardware platforms that support the Java virtual machine. This cuts down on problems such as development costs and the time it takes to get a product to market, which have dogged software developers writing for multiple platforms in the past.

IBM will be delivering further Java improvements and technologies via the Internet, and future OS/2 releases. There are currently over 200,000 developers writing for Java, with names like Lotus, and Corel amongst them. Soon there will be a wide variety of Java applications to run, not just on your OS/2 Warp machine, but on any operating system that supports the Java environment.

Programming

For those who enjoy programming, OS/2 has a native language called REXX. REXX can be used as both a scripting and a programming language, the new version released in OS/2 is called Object REXX. Object REXX uses the latest in Object Oriented (OO) techniques to improve the REXX language even further. In fact you can now download a version of REXX called NETREXX, which enables you to write REXX applications and turn them into Java applications directly!

Networking

Networking plays an important role in OS/2. IBM has positioned OS/2 to be the premier networking client and server operating system, and its easy to see why. It supports all of the major networking protocols, and can co-exist easily in a heterogeneous network. Connections to these networks are easily maintained using the connections folder on the OS/2 Desktop. Further improvements have been made in relation to remote support for OS/2, including dial in support for customers as well as the TME 10 system, licensed from Trivoli, which allows for the remote monitoring of hardware/software of an OS/2 client.

You may have dreams of surfing the Internet. Well the Internet is nothing but a huge network! OS/2's built-in utilities enable you to connect to your local Internet service provider, or via IBM's service. The Internet is integrated into the OS/2 workplace shell, or Desktop. You can create URL objects to your favourite sites as well as FTP objects to your favourite FTP sites. With all this is the latest OS/2 version of Netscape 2.02, which is free to all OS/2 users. With it you can surf the web, read newsgroups, as well as handle your mail. I recommend the OS/2 version of Netscape for viewing your mail over the bundled version of Utmilite Light provided by IBM.

<p>Perfect 2000</p> <p>\$1350.00</p> <p>X86 System</p>	<p>Perfect 3000</p> <p>Intel Pentium 166Mhz MMX Intel Triton VX Chipset 512KB Pipeline Burst Cache 32MB EDO RAM 2.1GB EIDE Hard Drive 18 speed CD-ROM Sound Blaster 16 PnP 120W Multimedia Speaker Panasonic 1.44MB Floppy 2MB ET6000 128bit Video 15" N/L/R Mitsubishi Monitor 104 Honeywell Keyboard Microsoft Mouse & Pad Heavy Duty MidTower Windows 95 Full Version CD</p> <p>\$2090.00</p>	<p>Perfect 4000</p> <p>Intel Pentium II 233Mhz MMX Intel Pentium II Motherboard 512KB L2 Cache 64MB EDO RAM 4.3GB Quantum Hard Drive 24 X Mitsubishi CD-ROM Sound Blaster AWE32 Jazz 300W 3D Speaker Panasonic 1.44MB Floppy 4MB Matrox Video Card 15" Philips Monitor 104 Honeywell Keyboard Microsoft Mouse & Pad Heavy Duty MidTower Model Windows 95 Full Version CD</p> <p>\$3690.00</p>	<p>Reference Letter</p> <p>Dear Peter,</p> <p>I am writing to let you know that the Perfect 3000 Home Office Pentium 166 Mhz computer Systems recently purchased from your company has fulfilled all my expectations and its performance is excellent.</p> <p>Being newly introduced to Windows with this purchase, and not having any previous knowledge or familiarity of that operating system, I experienced some difficulty in bedding down this system. However, with the assistance of yourself and Justin Apperley this was quickly and promptly overcome.</p> <p>I wish to thank you and Justin for your courteous and friendly after sales service; It has been a pleasure doing business with you, and I have no hesitation in recommending your company to anyone wishing to purchase a similar system.</p> <p>John Grey</p>
<p>Perfect 3500</p> <p>AMD K6-PR200Mhz MMX Intel Triton VX Chipset 512KB Pipeline Burst Cache 32MB EDO RAM 3.2GB EIDE Hard Drive 18 speed CD-ROM Sound Blaster 16 PnP 120W Multimedia Speaker Panasonic 1.44MB Floppy 2MB Diamond Stealth 3DPRO 15" Mitsubishi Monitor 104 Windows 95 Keyboard Microsoft Mouse & Pad Heavy Duty MidTower Windows 95 Full Version CD</p> <p>\$2450.00</p> <p>Free internal 56Kbps Modem</p> <p>Robotics</p> <p>System Performance: SysMark32 :201* Winstone97 Business: 46.8*</p> <p>*Tested under the same configuration as above, performance will be changed in different configuration. Test result is just for reference</p> <p>Game Option: Diamond Monster 3D Card Add \$ 280.00</p> <p>DIAMOND</p> <p>AMD K6</p> <p>133MHz</p>	<p>Perfect Upgrade Choice</p> <div> <p>Upgrade from 286 or 386 to 686</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBM 6x86 P166+ 512Kb Motherboard 16MB EDO RAM 1MB S3 Video Card Equal to Pentium 166Mhz <p>Only \$466.00</p> </div> <div> <p>Award Winning Upgrade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBM 6x86 P200+ Abit 512KB Jumpless Motherboard 16MB EDO RAM 2MB ET6000 Video Card "PC World" April issue 1997 Rank No.1 in Top 10 PC review <p>Only \$688.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intel 200Mhz MMX add \$400.00 AMD K6-PR200MMX add \$300.00 </div>		<p>PC Upgrade & Repair</p> <p>All Perfect Systems come with 2 years parts & labor Warranty All Perfect Upgrade come with 1 year Warranty</p> <p>Ultimate Computing Technology</p> <p>264 Charman Road, Cheltenham Vic. 3192</p> <p>Tel: (03)95842896 Fax: (03)95845777 E-mail: uct@burwood.starway.net.au</p>

Other improvements

Another sign of the way computing will be done in the future is the facility to download fixes and new services from the Internet, directly from IBM. By selecting the "retrieve software updates" button you can update your OS/2 Warp system with the latest fix packs, as well as add additional programs/features. Compared to traditional methods, this is a much cheaper, and hassle free way of providing updates to users around the globe.

Another major addition to OS/2 is the inclusion of voice navigation and dictation. Voice navigation gives you a third way, besides your mouse and keyboard, to control and manipulate your computer. This feature can be used straight away, however, for more accurate responses from the system it is wise to take the system for a 10-minute training session.

As much fun as voice control can be, the biggest benefit comes from voice dictation. Some who have used the system have proclaimed it nothing more than a gimmick, and to some extent this is true. To get the most from voice dictation you will need at least a Pentium 100 with 32 MB RAM. You'll also need to put in several hours training the system, if you want to achieve reasonable accuracy. IBM claims that you can use the system with no training, and in the USA and Europe, this may be true. IBM bundles a American English dictionary in the Australian version, and a UK dictionary in the European version. Because of the addition of the US dictionary in the Australian copy of OS/2 I've found it sometimes works better if I fake an American accent! Training however will solve this problem.

It will take several hours to go through the training process. You'll need another 10 to 20 hours to train the system when it makes mistakes. The more you correct the system the more it learns. So that with time it will become more accurate,



If OS/2 were a vehicle...

cartoonist Rob Pickford

as well as getting to know words that it doesn't have in its dictionary. For example the article you are reading was dictated with the VoiceType system in Warp 4. So far I have corrected 25 errors, most of them being words that the system would not have encountered before. I am using a Pentium 166 with 32 MB RAM and performance is quite acceptable. If I was a speed typist I might say it was slow, however for the most part I can talk much faster than I can type. The only caveat I would have is that you must talk with discrete speech, that means you must put an audible gap in between every word you say. It is still, however, fun and very impressive technology.

Other goodies

A nice set of basic applications come bundled with OS/2, including a spreadsheet, a word processor, database, fax software, Lotus Notes Mail as well as a device driver CD-ROM. The device driver CD-ROM is displayed in your web browser, so that you can install the latest drivers, or be pointed to an appropriate Internet site to retrieve it.

A sampler CD-ROM is also supplied, on it you can read about, and test drive, some very nice OS/2 applications.

Depending on what you install, OS/2 does require more hardware than the

previous version. Without voice control and dictation and networked features it could quite happily run on a 486 DX/2 with 12 MB RAM, with all of the features installed I would recommend a Pentium 100 with at least 32 MB RAM.

Is it for you?

If you're an OS/2 user, Warp 4 is a decent upgrade. However if you are looking for something to run genuine Windows 95 and NT applications you should look at those platforms respectively. Application availability has been one of the perceived failures of OS/2, even though you can currently pick from amongst any one of three thousand OS/2 applications, as well as most DOS and Windows 3.x applications. In actual fact OS/2 Warp can run more applications than any other operating system available today, and that is what an operating system is supposed to do!

IBM, however, is now focusing a great deal of resources towards Java, and it is Java that will feature prominently in OS/2's future. As more Java applications become available, OS/2 users will have even more choices. With the momentum building up behind Java, combined with the performance and ease of use built in to the basic OS/2 system, could once again move OS/2 into a position of prominence in the computer industry.

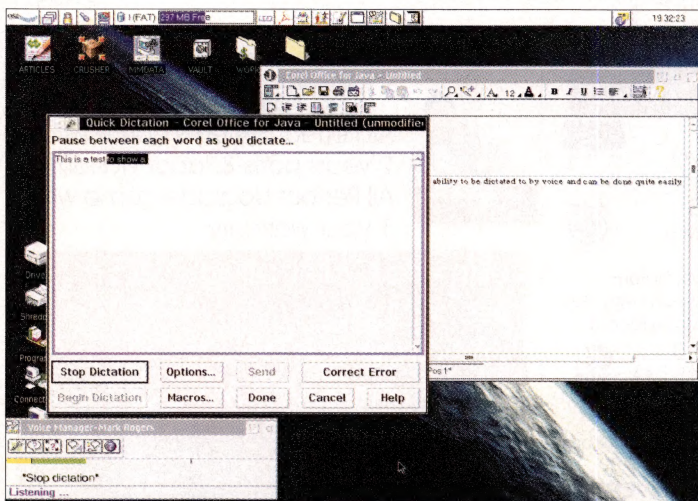


Figure 4. You can even dictate into Java applications

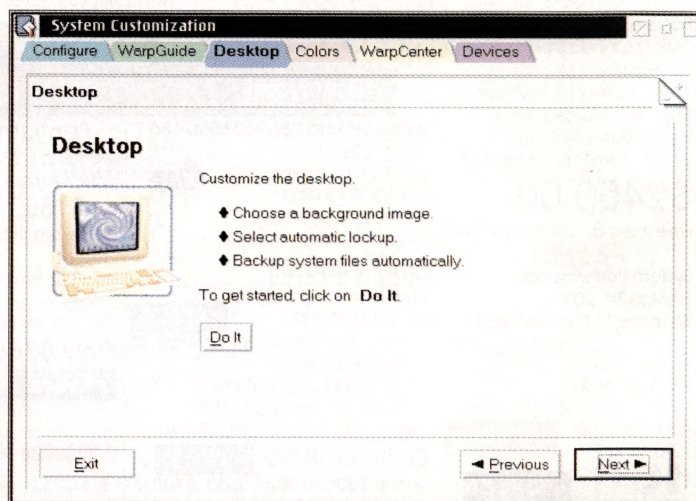


Figure 5. Let the WarpGuides help in setting up your system

Life Science Mysteries: The Green Files

CD-ROM REVIEW



Bernadette Houghton

Science doesn't have to be boring, as Corel's interactive Life Science Mysteries show. The Green Files teaches about cell structure and the effects of the environment on living organisms. Along the way, the user will conduct scientific experiments and hopefully develop his research skills.

Aimed at ages nine to sixteen the action in The Green Files occurs on board a ship called the *Blue Whale*. You are given two separate assignments:

- Oil Spill, which requires research into the underwater life at Baron Coral Reef in the Pacific Ocean following a massive oil spill. This involves collecting, examining and classifying plant specimens into kingdoms. You also determine the effect of oil on plants' ability to photosynthesise.
- The Gemco Disaster, which requires an assessment of the environmental damage caused

by dumping of toxic waste on Coco Bay Island. This involves analysing and classifying soil, water and vegetation samples from different parts of the island and determining which parts of Coco Bay Island the toxic waste has affected.

To complete the assignments, you explore various rooms of the *Blue Whale*, clicking on objects, reviewing the audio-visual materials and following any written or verbal instructions you are given. There is also an online hyper-linked textbook, the Learn Zone, which you can refer to at any time. This contains 6 short lessons:

- Science and Technology: Observations and Inferences
 - The Scientific Method
 - Characteristics and Needs of Organisms
 - The Structure and Function of Cells
 - How Cells Grow, Divide and Specialise
 - Scientific Naming of Organisms
- Lessons also contain quizzes, music clips and interactive games that help to reinforce the material.

You can use any of the equipment and facilities on the ship, including a microscope, e-mail, fax machine and video conference system. Hints are available at any time by clicking an intercom. At the end of each assignment, you report your findings. If your conclusions are accurate, you'll be thanked and congratulated; otherwise you'll be urged to re-evaluate your findings. Once the assignments are complete, you can continue to explore the *Blue Whale*, viewing the audio-visual materials and browsing the Learn Zone.

Life Science Mysteries: The Green Files makes learning fun. It provides extensive reinforcement for the material you learn at your own pace. It is sure to be a much-used resource for schools and libraries.

Info Box

Life Science Mysteries: The Green Files

Minimum system requirements

- 486DX-33 processor
- 8 MB RAM
- Windows 3.1
- 256-colour display
- Sound Blaster or compatible sound card
- Mouse
- Double-speed CD-ROM drive
- 4 MB free hard disk space

Availability and Cost

Available from most Corel retailers. Contact Corel Customer Service Centre on 1800 658 850.

RRP: \$79



Figure 1. Experimenting in the Laboratory

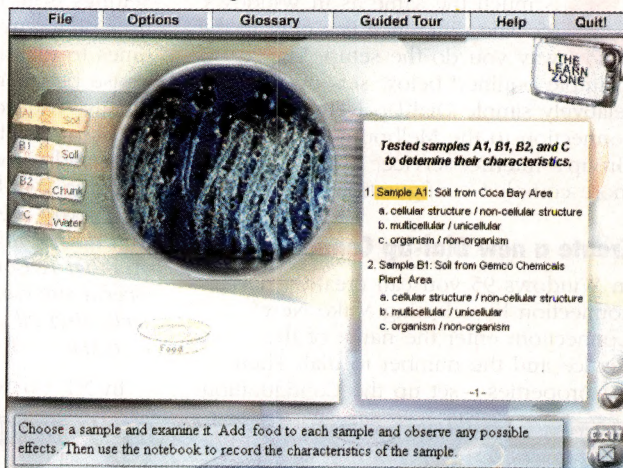


Figure 2. Close-up of an experiment

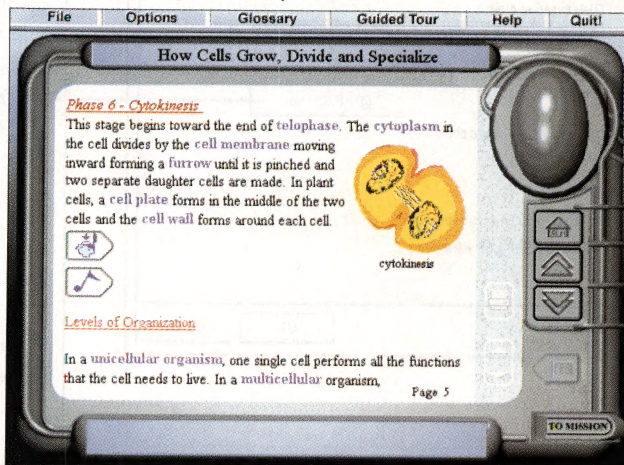


Figure 3. The Learn Zone

Dial-Up Networking in NT 4.0 Workstation

TUTORIAL

Richard John

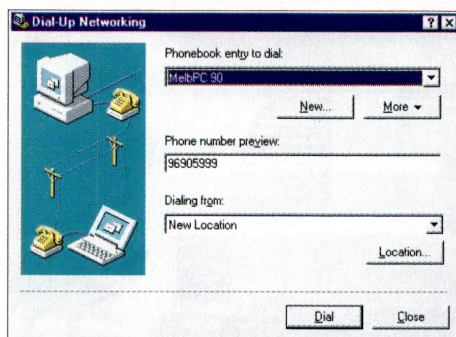


Figure 1. Dial-Up connection in Windows NT 4.0 Workstation

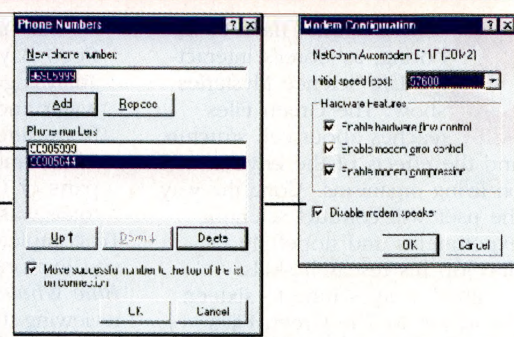
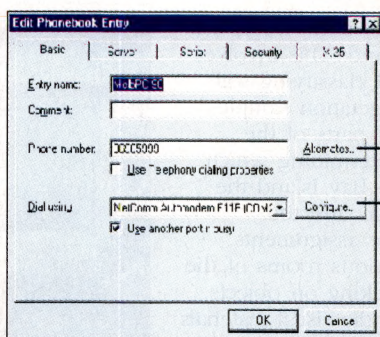


Figure 2a. Edit Entry and Modem Properties in Windows NT 4.0 Workstation

Setting up a Dial-Up Networking connection in NT 4.0 Workstation is much the same as in Windows 95. The difference lies only in the way you do the setup. The example outlined below sets up a relatively simple Dial-Up Networking connection to the Melbourne PC User Group's Internet service. It doesn't cover more complex configurations.

Create a new Dial-Up Connection

In Windows 95 you can create a new connection by selecting Make New Connection, enter the name of the service and the number to dial. Then—via properties—set up the Configuration.

Then, from within Dial-Up Networking/Explorer view, select Connections/Settings from the menu to set up your user preferences, such as the number of times to dial and amount of time to pause between re-dial attempts, etc. Finally, you go to Start/Programs/Accessories, choose Dial-Up Scripting Tool and associate the login script file with the Dial-Up networking connection [Ed: if you use PAP with the PPP protocol, you do not need to use a script file. Another reason to choose PAP with PPP over a SLIP connection, is that Melb PC is switching all connections to PPP, with PAP. —CAD]

In NT 4.0 Workstation, from within

Explorer, select Dial-Up Networking to get a dialog box with a dropdown list, from which you select the service you want to dial (Figure 1). From here, you complete the entire configuration. Click on the More... button and you are presented with a menu of choices. The menu items most ordinary users are interested in are Edit, Entry and Modem Properties, and User preferences.

Edit Entry and Modem Properties

Select Edit Entry and Modem Properties and a tabbed dialog box pops up. There are separate tabs for Basic, Server, Script (Figure 2c), Security and X25. Of these, you will most likely be interested in the

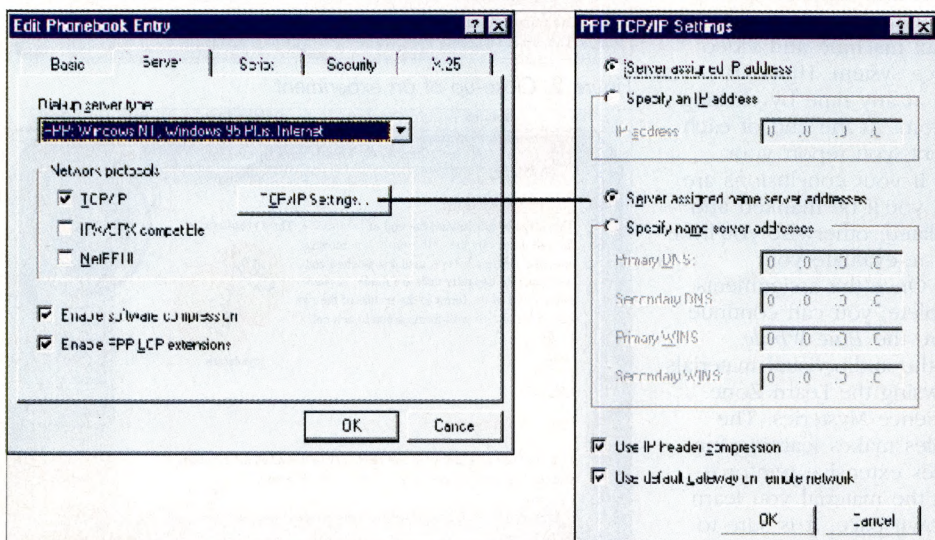


Figure 2b. Specify login script file for Windows NT 4.0 Workstation

Name of Dial-Up Connection	Properties	More.../Entry and Modem.../Basic
Phone number	Properties	More.../Entry and Modem.../Basic
Modem properties	Properties	More.../Entry and Modem.../Server
Protocols	Modem/Configure	More.../Entry and Modem.../Server
Login Script	Accessories/Scripting Tool	More.../Entry and Modem.../Script
Dial Attempts	Connections/Settings	More.../User Preferences

Table 1. Differences between Win 95 and Win NT 4 Workstation

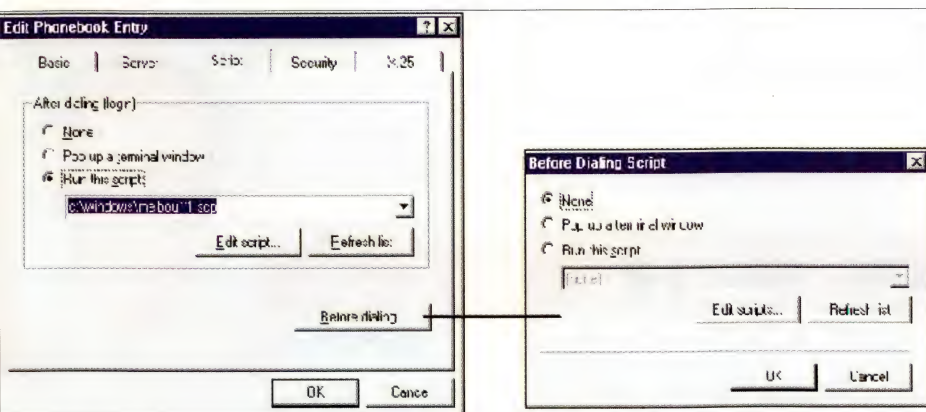


Figure 2c. Enter Server and protocol settings in Windows NT 4.0 Workstation

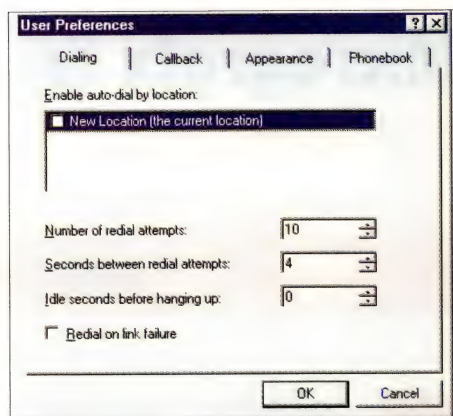


Figure 3. User Preferences

first three, only. [Ed: you need to check that the "security settings" is plain text and Microsoft Encryption, (the default).—CAD]

Under the Basic tab (Figure 2a), you enter the name of the connection, phone number to dial and so on. Against number, you can elect to enter alternative numbers to dial and cycle through each one.

Under Script (Figure 2b), enter the name of the login script file to run.

From the Server tab (Figure 2c), select

- Dial-Up Server Type

- Network Protocols and TCP/IP settings
- Enable software compression
- Enable PPP LCP Extensions.

When you have finished, click OK.

User and logon preferences

Finally, when you are returned to the main Dial-Up Networking dialog box, click on the More.. button once again. This time, select User Preferences. Enter your preferences for number of redial attempts and the amount of time to pause between redialing (Figure 3).

That's it for NT 4.0 Workstation. No doubt you have to enter the same amount of information as for Windows 95, but at least you're doing it from the one place, not three as in Windows 95.

Summary

Table 1 summarises the differences between Win 95 and Win NT 4 Workstation.

About the author

Richard John's e-mail address is: rij@melbpc.org.au

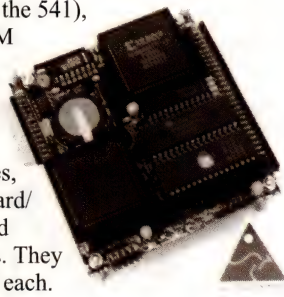
Australian-made Embedded Computers: PC/104 or ISA bus

PC540/1 PC/104 Computers

These computers use the PC/104 bus, an international standard for embedded systems. The X86 instruction sets suit standard PC compilers, or the \$179 Pacific C Compiler. These boards use the 80C188EB and V51 CPUs.

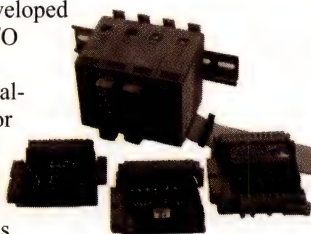
The boards run programs from PROM or a FLASH-based DOS provides the familiar DOS environment. DRAM to 1 Mbyte or CMOS RAM to 512 Kbyte is available.

Both boards have two serial ports (550 compatible on the 541), RTC, EEPROM and Xilinx gate arrays for additional I/O. The 540 has 40 I/O lines, The 541 has hard/floppy disk and LPT interfaces. They are \$350/\$450 each.



JBLOCK Modular I/O for PCs, Embedded Single-board CPUs

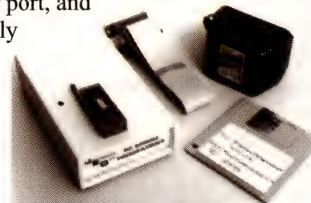
JED has developed a range of I/O modules for industrial real-world I/O for a variety of applications driven from SBCs or PCs.



A 26-way ribbon cable, called a JBUS cable, runs in multi-drop mode from an I/O port on any single-board computer to a 26-pin connector on each I/O module. JBUS has an 8-bit address and bi-directional data bus, and low-true READ, WRITE, and ADDRESS strobes. Timing is simple: strobe address and then data into the modules. An address switch in the top of each module sets up the address. Up to 63 modules are addressable, with 8 I/O per module. Modules released are 8 relay out, 8 opto in, 8 analog (12-bit) in and PC printer port to JBUS.

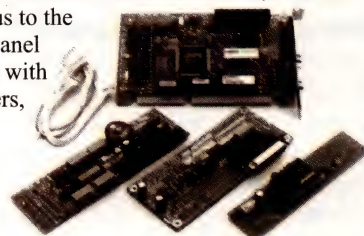
\$300 PROM Programmer

This no-fuss programmer plugs into a PC's printer port, and automatically writes PROMs from 8 k to 4 Mbytes.



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Micrografx Windows DRAW 5

SOFTWARE REVIEW



Bob Burt

The complete title for this product is *Micrografx Windows Draw 5 Graphics and Print Studio*. Having explored (but by no means exhausted) its graphics designing and manipulation possibilities, I believe it lives up to its impressive title. Incidentally, it is also a suite of *Microsoft Office-Compatible* products, which means that if you are already using Microsoft Office, you will find that its toolbars, menus and shortcut keys are largely already familiar to you and that many tasks are performed by using similar procedures. However, despite these reassuring likenesses, there is such a range of actions that can be performed by the various components of this drawing package that I would expect you, like me, would require much more than an hour or two to become comfortably familiar with it.

General description

Draw 5 is presented on two CD-ROMs. The first of these contains, in addition to the installation setup, the suite of five applications. These are

- Windows Draw 5—the controlling application
- Instant 3D—to construct 3D figures or text
- Photo Magic—to treat photo images with special effects
- ABC Media Manager—to preview and select clipart and photo images

Info Box

Micrografx Windows Draw 5

Minimum system requirements

- 486DX/33 processor
- Windows 95/NT 3.51
- 8 MB RAM (12 MB recommended)
- Hard drive with 45 MB of free space
- High-resolution video (VGA, 256 colours)
- CD-ROM drive
- Mouse or other pointing device

Price and availability

Available from major software houses at around \$65

- ABC QuickSilver—to place, view and edit DRAW files inside Web pages.

The second CD-ROM provides a mass of support material, including

- More than 300 Project Wizards
- More than 20,000 clip art figures and photo-images
- More than 250 typefaces
- More than 50 import and export graphics filters.

Installation of the applications and some support material is required before you can start using the programs. You have three options

- Typical—requires 71,324 KB of hard disk space
- Compact—still requires 62,224 KB of hard disk space
- Custom—make your own choices.

If you can afford the space (and you really shouldn't be considering running Draw unless you can) I recommend the *Typical* installation. You can probably prune back later on—for example, 30 True Type fonts (out of the 250 or so available) are installed and you're unlikely to need all of those.

Setup does not provide for the installation of *Micrografx ABC QuickSilver*. This is because QuickSilver is actually a *plug-in* that works with your Internet Web browser (Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator) to enable you to view DRW files. You can look at them in your browser or embed them in an HTML script and view them when you open the file. You execute either MICROSOFT.EXE or NETSCAPE.EXE from the CD-ROM to install QuickSilver. It acts as an ActiveX control for the Internet Explorer and as a plug-in for Netscape Navigator.

QuickSilver is actually provided free of charge on the Internet and is available from the Web site <http://micrografx.com/quicksilver>. Web developers can use *Micrografx Designer* to create Web pages (creating objects and setting their properties), but you need only your browser to simply view them. Full details of the features of QuickSilver are provided at the site, together with instructions on how to use them.

**comprehensive
Project Wizard
and extensive
design library**

Using Draw 5

On first starting Draw you are presented with a choice

- Start with Project Wizard...
- Start with blank page...
- Learn about Draw...
- Open file...
- Cool Draw Demo...

This lead-in is typical of the assistance provided within the application. Certainly the simplest way of actually using Draw is to opt for the *Project Wizard*, but you do have to choose among the 300 or so projects and templates to proceed further. These are grouped in 18 major categories, including *Awards*, *Blank Pages*, *Brochures*, *Business Cards* and so forth. Let us assume you have selected *Diagrams*. You can then select from 11 subdivisions, which include *Block Diagram*, *Comparison Chart*, *Family Tree*, *Flowchart* and even *Graph Paper*. The Wizard provides all the help you are

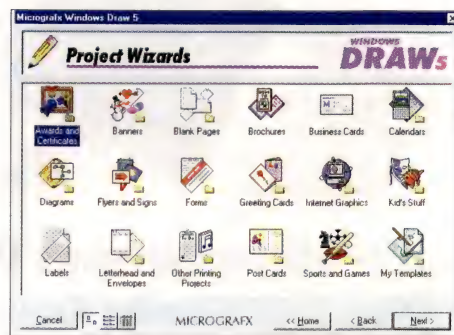


Figure 1. Project Wizards for Draw 5

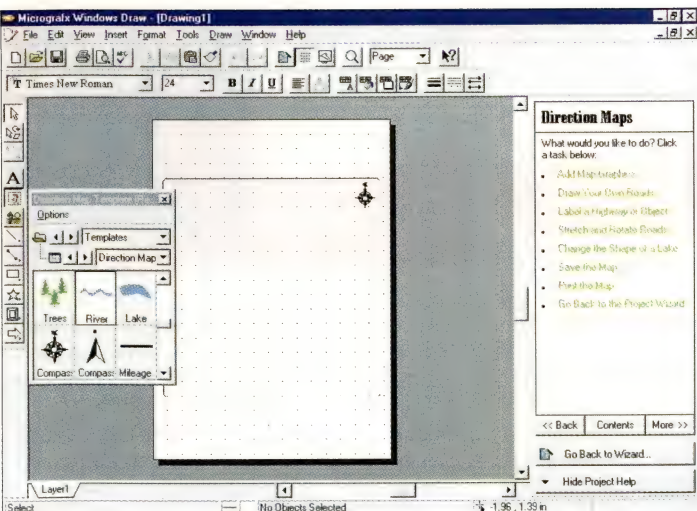


Figure 2. Preparing a direction map

likely to need for every step of the way to completion of your masterpiece of the moment.

There are more than 30 drawing tools provided via both the dockable toolbars and the menus, certainly including all the features you could expect to see in a good drawing program. There are also a few you may not have expected, like a spelling checker. There is plenty of material to explore.

Instant 3D, Photo Magic and ABC Media Manager can be used independently, but they are also directly accessible from within DRAW. The first two can be invoked by clicking on the *Insert* menu, selecting *Object*, then choosing from the presented list. Incidentally, this provides a third option, *More objects...* which conveniently displays a dialog box listing other graphics design programs you may have on your computer. Using this box, I added Microsoft Clipart Gallery, Microsoft WordArt 2.0 and Micrografx Picture Publisher 6.0 to the presented list. Photo Magic is actually a limited edition of Picture Publisher 6.0.

By clicking on the *Insert* menu, then

selecting *Clipart*, you call up the ABC Media Manager. For most of the material indexed in this application, you will need the *Contents* CD-ROM to be in place. Then it's simply a matter of selecting a thumbnail image from its catalogue and using *drag and drop* to plant the image into your working space in Draw. Although I have mentioned it before, in earlier reviews, it is worth repeating that Media Manager provides transparent file conversion. This means you can *drag and drop* images of more than 50 different file formats in and out of the Media Manager without calling up the appropriate filter.

Using Instant 3D

Two *Resource Catalogs* provide materials for your dynamic designs. Each contributes a range of objects, presented as thumbnails and you have the choice of textures to provide the required finish. These include such items as aluminium, brass, apple and even coins. A range of lighting effects is on offer and there is also a choice of backdrops. You can add text and, although the procedure for

selecting the text style, bevel style and texture could hardly be simpler, there is even a *Text Wizard* available for these operations.

Using Photo Magic

You use this program in virtually the same manner as Picture Publisher. As the latter has been reviewed in *PC Update* on two previous occasions (December 1994 and April 1996), little more needs to be said, except to confirm that the package is both simple to use and highly effective. Photo Magic includes more than 50 special effects tools to enhance that special image. You can incorporate texture changes by using watercolour or charcoal effects and introduce controlled distortions such as warp and twirl. The online help is substantial and includes a series of useful tutorials.

Conclusion

This package is ideal for the beginner, with its comprehensive Project Wizard and extensive design and image library, yet it is capable of providing good support for the more experienced designer. □

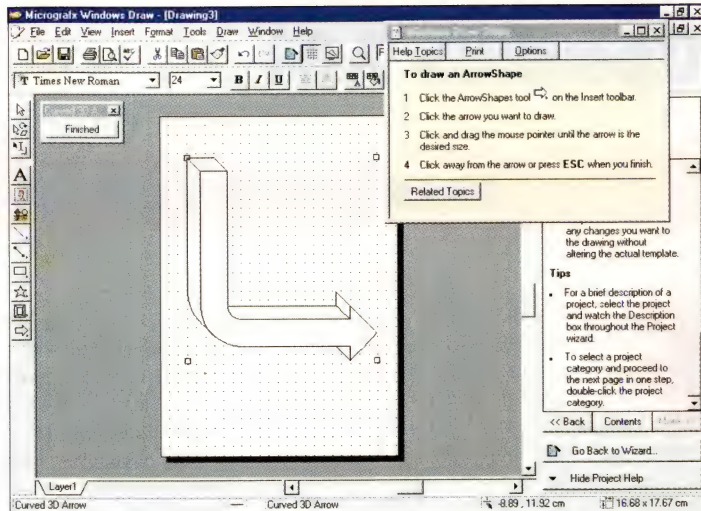


Figure 3. Following Wizard instructions

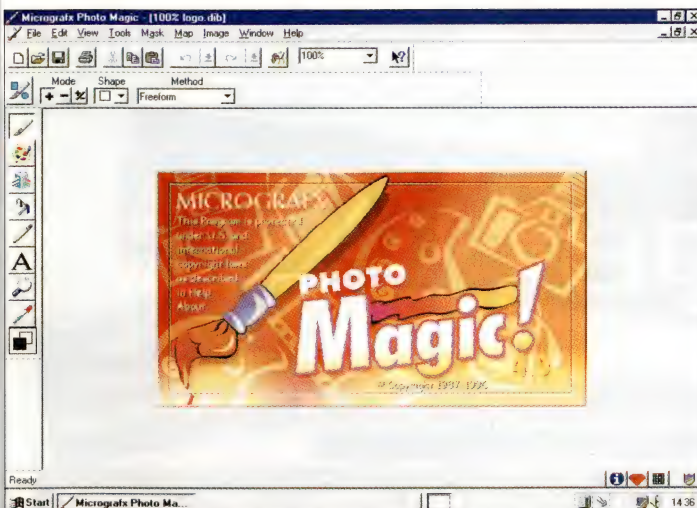


Figure 4. Photo Magic

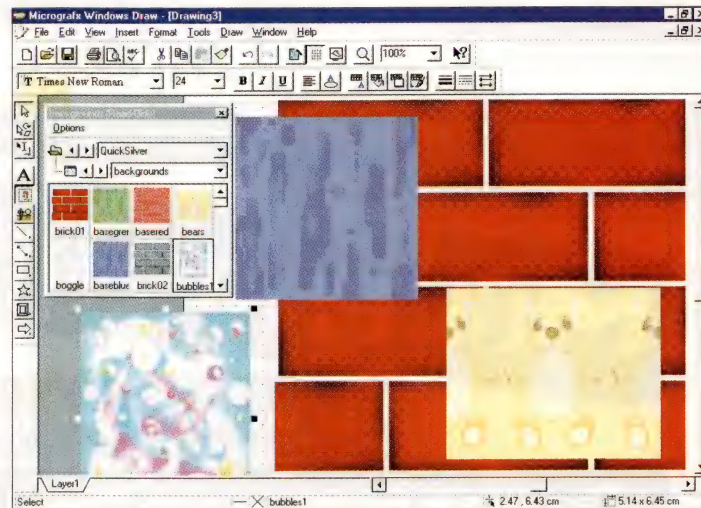


Figure 5. A choice of backgrounds

OPERATING SYSTEMS

Greg Eden

OpenDOS

For all you diehard DOS jockeys, there is life after Windows 95. Caldera Inc. has purchased the rights to Novell DOS 7 (aka DR DOS) and re-released it as OpenDOS 7.01. More interestingly OpenDOS is free for non-commercial use. Caldera has released OpenDOS in a similar manner to LINUX. Even the source code is to be released.

Caldera has also promised to release a suite of Internet tools that will even work on a 286! To take advantage of this development, just download OpenDOS from Caldera's web site at <http://www.caldera.com>. While you're at it, you can also read the news about OpenDOS developments.

OpenDOS is more than just a clone of MS-DOS. It is an advanced operating system that comes in two flavours. One with a suite of networking tools, including Personal NetWare, that unpacks to five 1.4 MB floppies, the other a "Lite" version—without networking—that unpacks to three floppies.

OpenDOS is a full-featured DOS that can multitask on Pentium, 486 and 386 systems. It also contains Novell Personal NetWare for easy peer-to-peer networking. OpenDOS has tools for defragging hard drives, DPMS (Display Power Management Support), DPMI (Microsoft's DOS Protected Mode Interface) memory management and Stacker disk compression. A complete on-disk manual, called DOSBOOK, is provided.

OpenDOS also includes the Novell VLM client, which supports all versions of

Netware, including Personal NetWare and Advanced Netware versions 2.x, 3.x and 4.x. This includes the Personal NetWare server and a large number of DOS network card drivers.

The OpenDOS license means that if you run computers in a not-for-profit environment, for example a school, religious organisation or charity, you may freely use OpenDOS. This could save hundreds of dollars in license fees for DOS and peer-to-peer network software alone.

Switching from MS DOS to OpenDOS

To make the switch, you will need to learn some new commands and modify any old MS-DOS batch files, as OpenDOS doesn't mimic all of MS-DOS. OpenDOS also uses DPMS memory so that it can load programs and device drivers outside of the normal 640 KB, and multitask DOS programs. As a consequence you must use the OpenDOS cache and memory management tools. Tools designed for MS-DOS will not work correctly with OpenDOS.

OpenDOS can be configured as a plain DOS by loading HIMEM.SYS and ignoring the rest, but this cripples its best features. Although, a plain setup is the best way to play DOOM, as DOOM does not cohabit happily with DPMS memory. You can set up a configuration menu in CONFIG.SYS so that you can select

environments at bootup. Both Windows 3.1 and Workgroups 3.11 operate quite happily under OpenDOS, the install program will add a group to your desktop if Windows is installed before OpenDOS.

I have tried OpenDOS on four computers with only one compatibility problem—a machine on which, for some inexplicable reason, the CD-ROM driver would not load if the machine was booted from the hard drive. When it was booted from a floppy disk, the driver in question operated correctly. I suggest that before you chuck out your old DOS, it would be sensible for you to make a copy of your old CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files. Keep them handy just in case you need to restore your system to its former glory.

Should you switch?

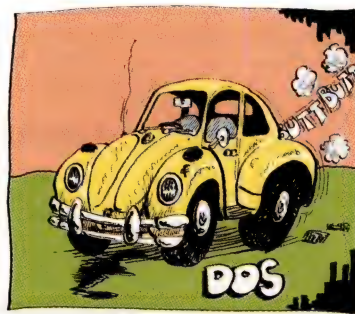
OpenDOS is not for everyone. It will greatly enhance the capabilities of older 386 and 486 machines that still run DOS. But there is a learning curve.

OpenDOS commands are not identical to the MS-DOS commands you already know.

Memory management is quite complicated. A comprehensive set up program configures your machine for you, but to solve problems, say for example the above mentioned solution for running DOOM, you will have to understand DPMI.

Last words

The OpenDOS internet browser WebSpyder is now in beta test and is downloadable. If you are interested in seeing if OpenDOS can put life back into your own machine, or just curious, download it, and try it. You have nothing to lose, except perhaps the time required to restore your old DOS. □



If DOS were a vehicle....
cartoonist Rob Pickford

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as reviewed by George Skarbek in July *PC Update*

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- Teletext in multiple page mode, with DDE and background capture in ASCII text mode.

The Win/TV pci card runs only on a PCI bus under Windows 95 using a graphics card that supports Direct Draw. Most cards under 12 months old will be OK, a new graphics card (ET6000 with 2 MB RAM) is available for \$100, installed.

RRP for this fantastic product is \$299, inclusive of sales tax.

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CLUB PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Stan Johnstone



Our forthcoming move to Dorcas Street is taking up a lot of our time both in the planning and documentation, as well as in the office, as they prepare for the re-location. A lot has been done, but every day we find something else that has to be fitted into the schedule.

Important matters, like the location of the Coke machine so that it is available at all hours, are getting just the same consideration as everything else!

By the time you read this the building refurbishment works will be out to tender, and work on site will commence later in the month. The landlord's external refurbishment and internal modifications should also be complete.

Internet

Much of our planned expansion and investment in new equipment has been held back over the past months as it was not practical to increase the number of lines for a short period.

In the meantime, the new digital 56 kbps equipment we have been waiting for is now coming onto the market in what would seem to be perfect timing for our move. Our existing Dataplex modems, which are only twelve months old, will be upgraded also to 33.6 kbps. These will continue to be more than adequate for most of our members but, if possible, will be converted to use digital technology.

As one of the first steps in preparing for the move, we are changing all our 120-minute lines to PAP dialling as from Monday 4 August 1997. This protocol has been found to be so much more reliable than the scripted PPP or the once-favoured SLIP, and it is to help you prepare for the move that we are doing it at this time.

Although nothing ever works completely according to plan, we are aiming for a seamless transfer as we move from one address to another. Murphy, please take a holiday.

Honorary Life Members

Elsewhere in this issue you will find the notification of the Special General Meeting to bestow Honorary Life Memberships on **Bruce Elliott** and **Charles Wright**.

Due to business commitments, Bruce Elliott has been forced to resign as Treasurer, a position he has held for three-and-a-half years. Bruce was appointed at a time when Melb PC was in a poor financial position, and his professional knowledge and skill have enabled us to budget carefully to meet changing conditions, and to bring us to the secure financial position we are in today.

Charles Wright has been President three times, Vice-President four times and served on the committee many other times since 1988. He served on the committee during some of the most difficult times when the group was taken to the brink of extinction. He was also successful in finding Bruce Elliott at a time when we needed him most.

Charles has continued to work behind the scenes with the Internet team until last month. His work commitments have also become more demanding. It is most appropriate that proper recognition be given to the work he has done.

I trust you will all support me in recognising the time, work and effort both Bruce and Charles have devoted to Melb PC.

Dial help

A couple of months ago I expressed concern that our Dial Help pages may not be up to date.

Gloria Simos took up the task with great enthusiasm and contacted everyone on the list to ensure that it is now current. Some names have been deleted, and some headings are now deleted as many older software and hardware products are no longer of interest.

A few headings may have a *vacant* sign where we now seek someone to volunteer to provide occasional advice and assistance. If you feel you could help, please contact Gloria by leaving a message at the office (or e-mail to gsimos@melbpc.org.au) and she will be pleased to add your name to the list.

If you can provide help in some new field we are not covering presently please let us know.

Home visit assist

While on the subject of helping, I have mentioned helping members in their own homes. From the letters and messages I have had, there is a real need for this type of assistance for those who may be restricted in their activities or mobility for one reason or another.

Last month I mentioned the offer by **Ian Felsenthal** to assist me with this, based on his own experience with the University of the Third Age. Ian has now set up a database to enable him to find suitable help—although to date his list of helpers is longer than his list of those asking for help.

As mentioned earlier, the main problem is to overcome the reserve of the one who needs the help but is too shy to ask. When I read of the modest way most members understate their capabilities and experience when offering help, it is quite obvious that these members are pleased to be able to share what they have learnt with someone else. We can all muddle along by ourselves, but the swapping and sharing of knowledge with others enables us all to get the most out of an enjoyable pastime.

I took the opportunity to mention this recently when I visited the Retirees SIG, but naturally enough they are already doing it quietly amongst themselves. However, many members are unable to attend even a daytime SIG. If they can

Special diary date

- When:** Friday 15 August, 6.30 pm
- What:** Seminar-format course: *Equipment for the Small Office/Home Office*
- Length:** Three hours
- Cost:** \$15
- Where:** Melb PC
66 Albert Road
South Melbourne
- Book:** (03) 9699 6222

go, they may still be too reticent to put their hand up to ask a question.

Ian Felsenthal has kindly permitted me to publish his contact for Home Visit Assist. Ian's phone number is (03) 9584 6391, or e-mail him at imf@melbpc.org.au. If you are available to help with this program, or if you would like someone to help you, please contact Ian.

Orientation days

As we are right in the middle of the move and we don't want you to see how dis-organised we really are, I will not be holding an Orientation day this month.

The next one will be in October probably, in the new offices, so I'm afraid you will have to hold off until then. Hopefully we will have something really grand to show you.

Seminar nights

Lynn Pollock's three-hour training seminars are still attracting good numbers. I have tried to get him to re-run some of his previous ones following the requests for repeats, but he still comes up with new and interesting topics each month.

On Friday 15 August 1997, starting at 6.30 pm the subject will be "Equipment for the Small Office/Home Office". For only \$15, Lynn will show and talk about using your PC for faxing, scanning, optical character recognition, etc.

As always, bookings are essential, so call the office on (03) 9699 6222. Do it now before the class is booked out!

On to next month

In the meantime, it's back to choosing colours, trying to make things fit in, making sure there are enough power points around, and all those other bits and pieces. Who knows what equipment we will be using in five years time that we need to make provision for now?

And of course, before I forget, I have to find somewhere to put that Coke machine!

Best wishes,

Stan

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Special General Meeting

CLUB BUSINESS

Bill Ford, Secretary

A Special General Meeting will be held starting at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 6 August 1997 at the Pharmacy College, 381 Royal Parade, Parkville.

The only business at this meeting will be to put and vote on the following motions:

That Bruce Elliott be made an Honorary Life Member in

recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Group.

Proposed by: Stan Johnstone

Seconded by: Yahya Abdal-Aziz

That Charles Wright be made an Honorary Life Member in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Group.

Proposed by: Carol Daniels

Seconded by: Stan Johnstone ☐

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	{ 51625A	4 each colour \$45	BJC210	BC05	4 each colour \$45
600/660/690C	{ 51629A	4 Black \$45	BJC600/610/620	{ BJI201Bk	6 Black \$35
	{ 51649A	4 each colour \$45		{ BJI201CMY	2 each colour \$45
690C Photo Cart	C1816A	4 each colour \$45	BJ300/330	BJI642	3 Black \$35
820/850/870/1600c	51645A	3 Black \$45	BJC4000/4100 Jumbo	BC20	4 Black \$45
820/850/870	51641A	2 each colour \$45	& 4200/4550	BCI21Bk	30 Black \$45
1200 C/M/Y/B	51640	3 of 1 colour \$45		BCI21C	10 each colour \$45
Epson			BJC4200/4550 Photo Cart	BC22	6 each colour \$45
Stylus 400/800/1000	SO20025/39	4 Black \$35	BJ30/BJC70	BCI10Bk	15 Black \$35
Stylus Col/Pro/XL	{ SO20034	3 Black \$35		BCI11Bk	30 Black \$35
	{ SO20036	2 each colour \$45	BJC70	BCI11C	20 each colour \$45
Stylus Col II/IIi	{ SO20047	6 Black \$35	Lexmark / IBM		
	{ SO20049	4 each colour \$45			
Stylus Col 820/200	SO20047	6 Black \$35	4076/1020	{ 1380620	3 Black \$45
Stylus Col 820/1500	SO20049	4 each colour \$45		{ 1380619	2 each colour \$45
Stylus Col 1500	SO20062	2 Black \$35	C-ih / Xerox		
Stylus Col 400/500/600	SO20093	6 Black \$35			
Stylus Col 200/500	SO20097	4 each colour \$45	CJ300/4004	CJ300/8R7638	3 Black \$45
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Recognita Plus 3.2

SOFTWARE REVIEW



Bob Burt

This optical character recognition (OCR) program has gained an excellent reputation from its previous editions. As most readers will recall the detailed review of version 3.0 of Recognita Plus (*PC Update*, June 1996), this review deals mainly with the improvements and changes made in this current version.

A few words need to be said about the general nature of the product. The manual describes Recognita Plus as "... an omni-font pre-trained and trainable OCR software for page processing". It is Windows-based and can successfully read documents of all common font styles, even when these are mixed and in various sizes. A special button is invoked to read dot-matrix printout and the program can read fax files. It can even read hand-printed text. Bar codes and optical marks are also covered. It can automatically separate text and graphics and handles tables and columnar text.

Recognita also provides a WYSIWYG editor for reformatting text, recognises input from scanners and is capable of reading many languages.

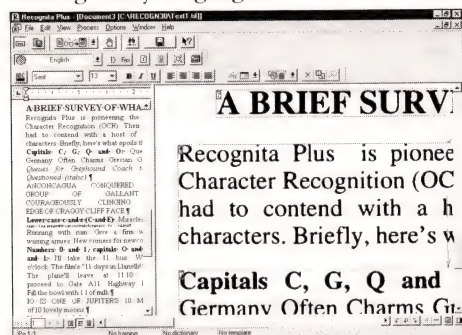


Figure 1. Converting a TIFF file to text

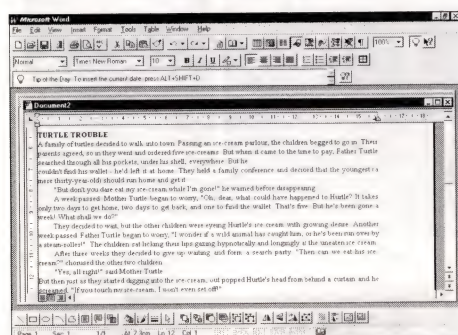


Figure 2. Converting in MS Word with

The package

Recognita Plus v3.2 (RC32) is presented as a complete application, not a set of upgrade disks for the earlier version. However, the packaging itself is slimmer (and less robust) than its predecessor. The program is supplied on eight 3.5-inch disks, three more than in version 3.0.

The main user's guide is identical to the spiral-bound manual supplied for v3.0, but it is accompanied by a slimmer 52-page guide which takes account of all the additions and changes introduced in RC32.

New features

RC32 is designed as a 32-bit application. It runs under Windows 95 or Windows NT, so most new features relate to benefits derived from using these. For example, *Installation* is now completed under the umbrella of a *Setup Wizard* and an *Uninstall* program is also available. The 32-bit architecture provides a speed advantage, particularly when running multiple applications.

The general appearance of the opening and text processing screens remains unchanged. That will comfort v3.0 users, but many subtleties come into play when you operate the program.

Quick launch

Installing RC32, puts a *fast-launch* button in your operating system's taskbar. You can use this to start RC32 processing data from a file or your scanner, bypassing the RC32 screen altogether. Thus you can start up say, Word for Windows (or any other Windows text handling program), position the cursor at the point you want to insert the text, and left-click on the fast-launch button. If for example you are

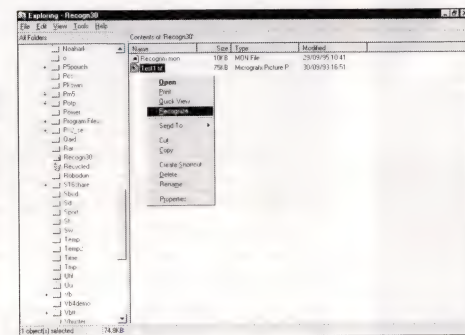


Figure 3. Right-click on an image file for

very professional,

worthy of serious

consideration

reading from a file, you enter the file name in the dialog box that appears, then watch as the text is processed and inserted into Word. Using the sample file supplied with RC32, the processing was completed in less time than it will take you to read this description. RC32 also handles multiple files and multi-sheet scanning (with an automatic document feeder).

This very effective enhancement replaces the need to create special menu items in your Word for Windows' System menu, something that was necessary to perform similar functions using Recognita v3.0.

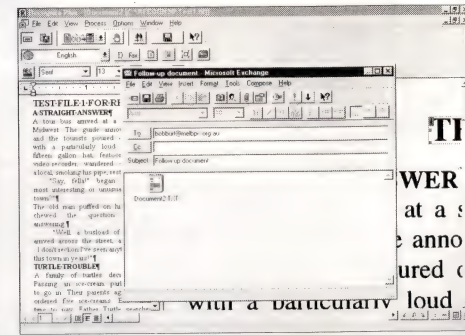


Figure 4. Sending text from an image by

PC Update, August 1997

Info Box

Recognita Plus 3.2

Minimum system requirements

- MS Windows 95 or NT
- AT 386, PS/2 or compatibles
- 8 MB RAM (16 MB recommended)
- 15 to 25 MB spare hard disk space
- One of the supported 300/400 flat-bed or sheet scanners, with or without ADF. A scanner is not required if reading directly from image files is your only requirement
- VGA screen
- Mouse or other pointing device.

Availability and cost

Sales are made exclusively through authorised distributors. The agent for Australia and New Zealand is: Digital Colour Publishing Pty Ltd
35 Kimmax Street
Sunnybank QLD 4109
Ph: (07) 3344 7244
Fax: (07) 3344 7255
e-mail: Maxe@dcp.com.au
(Max Grenkowitz, Managing Director)
Web: <http://www.dcp.com.au/recognita>
RRP: \$969 (Educational \$498)
Upgrade from v3.0: \$189
Upgrade from earlier versions: \$349

Quick recognition of image files

You can also right-click on an image file—in Explorer—or the image's icon on the desktop, to display the context menu, including a menu item *Recognize*, which has been added during installation. Clicking on *Recognize*, launches RC32, which reads the file, without displaying the RC32 main program screen. After processing, a *Save Text* dialog box appears in which you can enter an output file name and format. RC32 remains running in the background until you close it or exit Windows.

Reading from a message system

From within MS Exchange or Lotus Notes, RC32 can read directly image files of text documents. Other messaging systems are not currently supported. If you have Exchange on board, you will find that installing RC32 has also added *Recognita OCR Tools* to Exchange's Tools menu. You can also place a *Recognita* button on Exchange's toolbar using the *Customize Toolbar* feature.

If you want to read these messages *interactively*, RC32 starts, is displayed and active, with the processing of text directed to it. You use this mode when you want full proofing and the attachments saved to file. You can also elect not to read interactively, which is speedier, but gives you less control. You use this mode if you simply wish to return the results to the sender or forward copies to others.

You can click on *Recognize* to have all attachments, to all selected messages, searched for readable text, and change the relevant settings in RC32 to accommodate this.

Manipulation of newly recognised text

With v3.0 you could append text held in the clipboard to the end of a newly-recognised document. With RC32 you can now insert such text anywhere within a newly-recognised document. You can also paste such text into a different document, at the cost of losing the capacity to verify text from image.

Now you can also drag and drop selected text, save selected text to a file or send it, via e-mail. In fact, you can also send images and *Recognita* documents (.RCD) by e-mail. The latter can contain text only, image only or both linked together, but of course they can be opened only by a recipient who also has *Recognita* v3.0 or v3.2 on board. A new command allows you to save all open RCD files at once.

The toolbars and the WYSIWYG editor

You can float the three toolbars, or dock them at the top of the screen (not new), at the bottom (new) or at either side (new).

The editor is now equipped with standard vertical and horizontal rulers for controlled reformatting of margins, indents and tabs. It also supports word-wrapping and accepts fonts supplied for the Windows 95 international character set.

Languages

For our multilingual members, RC32 recognises 75 languages, with the Language Enhancement Package, available separately, that total is raised to 107.

Conclusion

The program is so well designed and the documentation and online help so complete that virtually all users familiar with Windows applications in general would have little difficulty getting started with RC32 and quickly mastering its main features. Interaction with other Windows applications is excellent and RC32 runs smoothly and quickly with multiple applications. It is my usual practice when preparing a review such as this to have many applications running, including my DOS-based text editor, at least one and sometimes two different screen grabber utilities, the application under review and its online Help file. RC32 ran very smoothly under these shared conditions.

My experience with RC32 is that it runs faster than its predecessor did when I reviewed it. In the meantime, I have upgraded from a 486 to a 686 processor and increased my machine's RAM from 16 MB to 32 MB. So I cannot determine to what extent the evident increase in speed is due to the 32-bit architecture. However, if you have a fast computer with plenty of RAM you should certainly be pleased with the performance of *Recognita Plus 3.2*. It is a very professional package worthy of serious consideration for any enterprise that needs reliable OCR work. □

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NT 4.0 Workstation and Windows 95 compared

OPERATING SYSTEMS

Richard John



A lot has been said about Windows 95 (Win 95) in the past. Not so with Windows NT 4.0 Workstation (Win NT4W). In this article, I seek to address this imbalance in a small way with a bias towards NT4W. In addition to what I present here, I've included additional sources of information, such as resource kits, web sites, newsgroups, FAQs, etc, from which you can obtain additional information.

Minimum system requirements

For Win 95, 16 MB is the recommended minimum RAM, and you should get good performance with 32 MB of RAM. For Win NT, you'll need a minimum of 32 MB, and want 64 MB. NT 4.0 Workstation "scavenges" for all the memory it can lay its hands on and runs the better for it. It is preferable to install NT on a separate partition or drive.

File systems

Before installing Win 95 or Win NT4W, you must decide which file system (FAT, FAT32, NTFS) you are going to use. Things to consider when making this decision:

FAT

The simplest and easiest to work with. You can install both Win 95 and NT4W either on the same partition or on separate ones. Files can be shared between Win 95, NT4W, DOS and 16-bit Windows. The biggest problems with FAT systems, is that you are limited to a maximum of 2 GB drive capacity, **per** drive or partition and large cluster sizes (up to 32 KB on the larger drives). Unless you use a partitioning utility, such as PowerQuest's PartitionMagic, which can resize FAT clusters. (A cluster is the minimum amount of physical storage required for a file on any given disk drive.)

FAT32

This is the 32-bit file system designed specifically to run under Win 95. The version of Win 95 supporting this file system is only available with the purchase of a new computer. You cannot buy this version of Win 95 separately off the shelf and upgrade your previous release. The version of Win 95 that supports FAT32 is called OSR2 (for Operating System Release). It is also known as 4.00.950B. This version must be installed on a

separate partition, and it is incompatible with NTFS (see below). If you plan to use Win 95 as your only operating system, and you do not plan to share files with Win NT4W or DOS, then you can use FAT32 instead of FAT. If you do, you will overcome FAT's 2 GB disk size limitation and you will have more efficient storage—that is to say, less wasted space thanks to smaller cluster sizes.

There is some scuttlebutt that NT 5.0 (the next release of NT) will support FAT32.

NTFS

An advanced file system designed for use specifically within the Windows NT Operating System. It must exist in a separate partition and once you decide on this course for your NT4W installation, you can bid adios to the 16-bit world. NTFS partitions cannot be accessed from FAT16 or FAT32 (Win 95) operating systems. Also, you can only convert back to a FAT system after backing up data, reformatting your hard drive and restoring data, unless you use a partitioning utility, such as PowerQuest's PartitionMagic.

The advantages of using this system, however, are many.

It supports

- File system recovery
 - Extremely large storage media, something like drives up to 2 TB (that's two terabytes or two thousand gigabytes)
 - Long file names.
- And it offers
- More efficient storage (maximum 2 KB clusters, irrespective of drive size)
 - Object level security.

NTFS does this by supporting object-oriented applications where all files are treated as objects with user-defined and system-defined attributes.

Below is a summary of your alternatives:

File System	Windows 95	Windows NT 4.0 Workstation
FAT	Yes	Yes
FAT32	Yes	No
NTFS	No	Yes

**some of the
issues to consider
if you're thinking
of switching**

Want to know more? Try these sites, where you will find detailed explanations (in the form of a FAQ or Frequently Asked Questions file).

- <http://www.lynx.bc.ca/~orca/faq.html>
- <http://www.savilltech.com>

Installation

You cannot upgrade Win 95 with NT4W. By that I mean you can't replace Win 95 with Windows NT 4. You must install it in its own directory. If you do this from the Win 95 desktop, a dual-boot system is set up automatically. You then can, if you wish, uninstall Win 95. But, if you already have Win 95, my advice is keep it, and create a dual-boot system. Furthermore, if you are into games and run mainly 16-bit applications then Win 95 is the go for you.

To do this, you will want to install NT4W from within the Win 95 shell, but in a separate directory from the one that holds Win 95. This will automatically set up a dual-boot system. To repeat: if you want dual-boot, do not install in your Windows directory. Install in a WinNT (or other) directory instead.

Another caution: Just watch that blue "screen of death". It lingers a long time, which might lead you to think your system has gone walkabout. If you're tempted to switch off your system, don't! Even though it gives the impression of being hung, it ain't. I speak from experience. Yours truly did precisely all of the things he wasn't supposed to do and spent the next three days sorting out the mess. That controlling shareholding in the local bottle shop wasn't required after all!

Installing applications

When you install NT4W in a dual-boot setup with Win 95, you can easily share applications between operating systems.

The first, and easy, approach is to modify the Environment path in NT4W to include the directory

C:\windows\system

—the Win 95 system directory. This has worked well for many of my applications but not all. To get at the Win NT4W Environment, go to Start/Control Panel/System and click on the Environment tab. You will see two windows—System Variables and User variables for Administrator. Scroll down the upper window to the variable named "Path" against which you will see a "value" entry something like this:

C:\WINNT\SYSTEM32;C:\WINNT;
C:\WINNT\RESKIT etc...

Clicking on this value in the lowermost window you will see:

%SystemRoot%\system32;
%SystemRoot%;C:\winnt\reskit;
C:\winnt\reskit\Perl;
c:\windows\system;

(Notice how this path is modified; it has "\windows\system" appended to it.)

A more reliable approach, however, is to reinstall the Applications. It's cumbersome but effective. Then again, with most applications now available on CD-ROM, it shouldn't be that much of a drag. Use the time to rediscover your taste for the good life.

Note, you don't have to duplicate the installations. You are merely ensuring that registries entries are updated for both Operating Systems. The trick is to reinstall all the applications smack on top of where they are already installed. At the end of the day (or week or month depending on how many applications you have) you just have to set up your shortcuts, which are straightforward.

You will need to duplicate applications that require different versions Win 95 and Win NT4W, for example Microsoft Internet Explorer.

Running applications

NT4W is fully optimised for 32-bit applications (Office 95 or 97 for instance) as distinct from Win 95, which is optimised to run 16- and 32-bit applications. What that means is that Win 95 handles 16-bit applications like Excel 4/5, Word 2/6 and so on, better than NT4W. While NT4W combined with the Pentium Pro (which is also optimised for 32-bit applications) or similar technology, will handle 32-bit applications better than Win 95 running on the same hardware. You actually pay a speed penalty when you run 16-bit applications on Pentium Pro, Win NT4W system.

Dial-up Networking

This is quite straightforward. No major dramas here. Unfortunately it took me three months to find this out. One of the main differences you will find between Win 95 and NT4W is in the way the dialog boxes are arranged. (See separate article "Windows NT Dialup Networking".)

Setting up Web browsers

I reinstalled Netscape under NT4W (not a duplicate, just a replace install), setup a shortcut on my NT4W desktop and then changed some settings to enable sharing of bookmarks and mail boxes.

To share Netscape bookmarks between Win 95 and NT4W repoint NT's Netscape Bookmark directory from

c:\Program Files\Netscape\Navigator\Program

to

c:\Program Files\Netscape\Navigator

—the Win 95 directory.

With mail, repoint NT's mail directory to the same directory as for Netscape Bookmarks above. Do this by first selecting "Options/Mail and News Preferences" from Netscape's menu. Select the Composition tab and edit the entry shown against "Mail File" to c:\Program Files\Netscape\Navigator.

Now you will see all of your mail in Netscape whether in NT4W or Win 95.

Pitfalls

CD-ROM

If you have a CD-ROM drive and a Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP card under NT4W, connect the CD-ROM drive to a spare EIDE port if you have one, not to the Sound Blaster. Win 95 will recognise the CD-ROM drive straight away but NT4W does not when the CD-ROM drive is connected to the Sound Blaster. That's because Win NT4W does not have suitable drivers anywhere that will operate a CD-ROM drive hanging off a sound card. Neither Microsoft nor Creative want to know. Welcome to NT.

There are other possible solutions, one of which is included below. This is a solution that was originally offered in a Usenet forum, it concerns a SB32 PnP card:

> Using a program called ICU supplied by
> Creative re-assign > the SB32 IDE port to
> tertiary port (address 1E8, IRQ 11).

If you have access to Usenet, check these newsgroups. You'll find heaps more information on this subject, and others

- comp.os.ms-windows.nt.setup
- comp.os.ms-windows.nt.setup.hardware
- comp.os.ms-windows.nt.setup.misc
- microsoft.public.windowsnt.domain
- microsoft.public.windowsnt.misc
- microsoft.public.windowsnt.setup

Take care not to swamp yourself. There is a lot of information to be digested in these groups. Take it a little at a time.

MIDI Sound

NT4W has problems playing MIDI files without some fiddling. This problem has been encountered by many people (which you will realise when you start following some of the NT newsgroups and see the volume of traffic on the subject). There are a lot of alternative solutions discussed in the NT newsgroups. One wacky one, was as follows:

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>It seems, to properly deinstall all drivers,
>you have to physically remove the (SB)
>card first. Reboot your system w/o the
>SB, shut down, reinstall the card. PnP
>should then properly identify this card as
>new and ask you to install all drivers.

Other sites

You can gather very useful additional information at these Creative sites,

- <http://www.creaf.com/wwwnew/tech/faqs/aue32faq.html>
- <http://www.creaf.com/wwwnew/tech/faqs/sbcdnt4.html>
- <http://www.creaf.com/wwwnew/tech/ftp/ftp-sb16aue.html>

About NT4W Service Packs

Before you upgrade your current version of NT with a Service Pack, ask yourself these questions:

- Are you having problems with your current version of Win NT?
- Will the upgrade fix your problems?
- Does v4 have additional features you want?

If you answer yes to "b" or "c", read the documentation accompanying the release. Do this before you do anything else. Then, do a complete backup of your current system, before you do install the Service Pack.

If you answered no to "a", leave it alone. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it... baby" (Confucius).

If your version of NT4W says it is Service pack 1, replace it with Service Pack 3 (NT SP3), which was released on 12 May 1997. But remember, **read the documentation first.**

Other useful resources

If you are hungry for more information (that's if you're not exhausted already), here are some additional resources to draw on:

- Windows 95 FAQs Saving Windows Settings at <http://www.lynx.bc.ca/~orca/>
- Tweak UI is part of a free bundle of utilities called Powertoy available at <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/common/aa2729.htm>
- Explorer has a variety of "switches" to enable different "views", find out about them at <http://www.balcyon.com/cerelli/explore1.htm>

Windows 95 sites

- <http://www.window95.com>
- <http://www.winsite.com>
- <ftp://ftp.winsite.com>
- <http://www.filez.com>
- <http://www.tucows.com>

Windows NT sites

- Tips and freeware, tricks and registry (Warning: hack into the NT4W registry at your own peril of course!) <http://www.jsiinc.com>
- One of the very few NT sites to include an NT FAQ <http://www.savilltech.com>

Books and help files

- *Windows 95 Resource Guide* (see *Tips and Tricks* by George Skarbek, *PC Update*, May 1997)
- *Windows NT 4.0 Workstation Resource Kit* (costs extra)
- *Mastering Windows NT Server 4* by Mark Minasi (comes highly recommended).

Conclusion

Please don't take my word for all this. I've only touched on some of the issues you'll need to consider if you are thinking of switching from Win 95 to Win NT. There are more thorough discussions about these topics, including installation, dual booting, Dial-Up Networking, sound, security and more—on the Web sites and Usenet newsgroups I've mentioned. Check 'em out. You won't be sorry.

About the author

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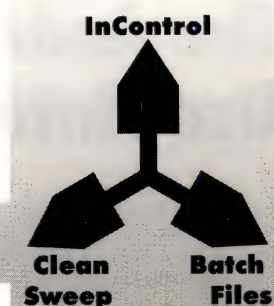


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Monitoring Windows software installation

THREE WAYS

Frank Schuffelen



Having previously had strange problems after installing new software, I decided to try to have some control over future installations, so that if something would no longer work, I might have a clue as to what could have caused the problem.

To this end, my son bought me a copy of QuarterDeck's CleanSweep for Windows 95, which does a pretty good job of monitoring installations, as well as having lots of other features. However, it was not foolproof and occasionally would not track an installation at all, or would claim to be finished when the software had not even started loading, as happened when I installed Norton Utilities. Norton Utilities was about to reboot the system before commencing installation, when CleanSweep claimed that the installation was complete! In fairness to QuarterDeck, CleanSweep worked about 80 to 90% of the time, but I needed something that always worked..

Thus, I was delighted to read an article in the September 1995 issue of *PC User*, where two batch files were used, one called BEFORE.BAT and the other AFTER.BAT. I modified these batch files a fair bit. But still, to see which files had been added, changed or deleted could take well over an hour!

In control?

Recently a very good friend of mine told me about a program called InControl that does much the same thing, automatically.

Having just downloaded both InControl2 (Win 3.x) and InControl3 (Win 95), I decided to put InControl3 to the test, by comparing it with CleanSweep95 and my BEFORE.BAT and AFTER.BAT. This is not really an exhaustive test, as that would require comparing major installations of many pieces of software, which would be a huge job. This is merely a comparison between the three methods used on a small range of programs.

In my first test, I simply extracted various files out of a self-extracting file, which I knew would update and thus overwrite quite a few of the files in one directory. Here I was only comparing my batch files with InControl to see how accurate they might be. I was pleasantly surprised when I discovered that InControl

picked up not only the changed files, but also newly added files (before files are overwritten, they are deleted, but Norton Utilities copies and renames deleted files into a folder called \RECYCLED\NPROTECT). InControl located these files as being new, whereas my batch files did not pick them up, since they were stored in a hidden directory. Full marks to InControl.

InControl can be set to monitor an installation after keying in the name of the installation program. Another option is that you can run InControl before installation so that it looks at all files on the designated drives, including the registry file. After the installation process, including rebooting if necessary, run InControl again to report changes due to the installation. This latter method is the one I use all the time, as some programs reboot and then make more changes.

My favourite for checking installations is now InControl. It helps trace problems at installation and whether files in my WINDOWS\SYSTEM folder are overwritten. Another advantage is that it's shareware.

New broom

CleanSweep has many further options, which make it a very useful program overall. These include

- Uninstalling a program, with an option to back it up first
- Compressing an infrequently used program for later usage
- Creating a compressed backup of a program without deleting it
- Moving a program to a different drive or folder
- Transporting a program to another computer
- Finding duplicate copies of files

- Finding redundant DLL and VBX files
- Finding unused files and those that have not been used recently
- Finding orphans, files and items that have been left behind as part of an incomplete uninstall
- Restoring a backed up, archived or transported program
- Viewing the master log, which records every action
- Viewing the savings CleanSweep makes
- Viewing how large each folder is
- Last, but not least, the ability to configure it to your liking.

Since downloading the latest patch, which I came across on their Internet site, I find it works very reliably, and I would not be without it. I think it's excellent value. And it's also available for Windows 3.x. It is very useful for cleaning up your hard disk drive. However, if you only wish to monitor installations, to see which files get added, changed or deleted, you can't go past InControl, which is also available for either Windows 95 or Windows 3.x.

CleanSweep is available from software stores. InControl is shareware. □

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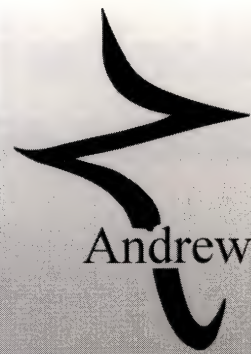
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The Andrew User Interface System

OPERATING SYSTEMS



Peter Kostouros

like Linux,

Andrew

is free

The UNIX operating system is about 30 years old. It runs on machines ranging from super-computers to PCs. A popular flavour of UNIX for the PC is Linux, independently developed by Linus Torvalds and contributed to by people across the Internet, most of whom have never met each other.

UNIX is essentially a text-based operating system, with a command line interface. If you are mostly familiar with a graphical user interface (GUI) as found in Windows, and Mac operating systems, you may find it difficult to grasp, at first. There is a graphical layer for UNIX, it's called X-Windows (or X), that offers a familiar GUI-style interface, and many programs including editors and drawing tools. For X,

there is the Andrew User Interface System, (Andrew). Andrew isn't a single program. It's a collection of integrated applications that you can use to compose and mail multimedia documents, that is to say, documents containing embedded objects such as graphics and formatted text.

About Andrew

Andrew was developed in the early 1980s by Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and IBM Corporation to provide a distributed computing environment for CMU. The work produced a graphical user interface, AUIS, a multimedia mail system, and a file system, the Andrew File System (AFS). Andrew is available for many systems including Linux, and includes several

Geek Speak

AFS

The Andrew File System is a location-independent file system. It uses a local cache to reduce the workload and increase the performance of a distributed computing environment. The first request for data from a server to be used by a workstation is satisfied by the server and placed in a local cache. Subsequent requests for the same data are met by the local cache.

Andrew

Andrew was a joint project between Carnegie-Mellon University and IBM to develop a distributed computing environment on the CMU campus. It was designed to serve 4,000 UNIX workstations. The project was named for Andrew Carnegie and Andrew Mellon.

Andrew Home

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~AUIS>

Andrew Consortium Home Page

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/cs.cmu.edu/project/atk-ftp/web/andrew-home.html>

Andrew FAQ

<ftp://ftp.andrew.cmu.edu/pub/AUIS/FAQ>
/FAQ.ascii

Andrew Newsletter

FTP Directory:
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Andrew BBS

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EZ

A document editor for the X (GUI) UNIX operating systems, including Linux.

FSF

The Free Software Foundation (FSF) is dedicated to eliminating restrictions on copying, redistribution, understanding, and modification of computer programs. They do this by promoting the development and use of free software in all areas of computing. Specifically, they are developing a complete integrated software system named "GNU" (GNU's Not Unix) that is upwardly compatible with UNIX.

The word "free" in their name pertains to freedom, not price. You may or may not pay a price to get GNU software. Either way, once you have the software you have three specific freedoms in using it. First, the freedom to copy the program and give it away to your friends and co-workers; second, the freedom to change the program as you wish, by having full access to source code; third, the freedom to distribute an improved version and thus help build the community. (If you redistribute GNU software, you may charge a fee for the physical act of transferring a copy, or you may give away copies.)

Free Software Foundation

<http://www.fsf.org/fsf/fsf.html>

gzip

The GNU compression utility. gzip reduces the size of the named files using Lempel-Ziv LZ77 compression. Whenever possible, each file is replaced by one with the filename extension ".gz".

The UNIX "compress" utility is patented (by two separate patents, in fact) and is thus shunned by the GNU Project since it is not free software (see FSF above). They have therefore chosen gzip, which is

free of any known software patents and which tends to compress better, anyway. All compressed files in the GNU anonymous FTP area (prep.ai.mit.edu/pub/gnu) are in gzip format and their names end in ".gz" (as opposed to "compress"-compressed files, which end in ".Z").

Gzip can uncompress "compress"-compressed files and "pack" files (which end in ".z"). The decompression algorithms are not patented, only compression is.

The gzip program is available from any GNU archive site. It works on virtually every UNIX system, MS-DOS, OS/2 and VMS.

Linux

A UNIX-like operating system, designed to provide personal computer users a low-cost, even free operating system comparable to traditional and usually more expensive UNIX systems. Linux's kernel was developed by Linus Torvalds at the University of Helsinki in Finland.

According to the Linux on the Web site, Linux running on a 486 PC compares favorably with systems that run on mid-range workstations from Sun and Digital.

Linux is distributed using the Free Software Foundation's copyleft stipulations.

tar

tar (for tape archive) is a UNIX shell command that creates a single file called an "archive" from a number of specified files or extracts the files from such an archive. A tar archive has the file suffix ".tar". The files in a tar archive are not compressed, just gathered together in one file. The name is derived from a time when files were commonly backed up to and occasionally retrieved from magnetic tape. □

programs that makes working with UNIX a breeze. Below I describe Andrew availability and installation, and introduce its document editor, EZ, and its multimedia mail agent, Messages.

Andrew availability and installation

Andrew is available on Infomagic's LINUX Developer's Resource CD-ROM set or you can download the latest version from Andrew's home site at <http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~AUIS>.

There are several files that make up Andrew: the word processor, the help system, insets, documentation, the mail package, and a miscellaneous file. Each file is a compressed archive. The entire Andrew distribution need not be installed. You can install a snapshot, for example the word processor, insets, and the mail package. The word processor package must be installed first, for any Andrew distribution.

There are no elaborate installation programs for Andrew. After I downloaded the Andrew distribution for Linux to a temporary directory, I installed it, by first creating a destination directory `/usr/local/andrew` (/ is a delimiter), and ran the following command for each file

in the distribution:

```
gunzip < andrew_file.tgz |
tar pxvf - -C
/usr/local/andrew
```

This command decompresses a file and loads it into the directory `/usr/local/andrew`. (gzip and tar are UNIX utilities that come with many Linux distributions. In this case, gunzip does the decompressing, and tar extracts the files that make up the archive.)

By default, Andrew has a base directory (`/usr/local/andrew`); if it installed in another directory, the environment variable `ANDREWDIR` must be set accordingly.

Additionally, the environment variable `PATH` must be modified to include the directory that contains the Andrew executable programs, in my case `/usr/local/andrew/bin`. These environment variables can be set in the file `/etc/profile`.

EZ, the document editor

EZ is a program you can use to manipulate text and non-text documents (Figure 1); it is a general purpose editor. There are many ways to launch EZ: the simplest is to invoke it from the command line (provided X is running):

```
ez file1.ez file2.cpp
```



If UNIX were a vehicle...
cartoonist Rob Pickford

This command opens two windows: one with the default EZ menu, one with a menu particular to cpp files. On my system, I have added an EZ entry to my window manager's floating menu.

As mentioned, when a file is edited, EZ loads the commands associated with the particular file. For example, when editing a text file, the text editing features are enabled, and when operating on a drawing, the drawing features are enabled. If a file consists of embedded objects (insets), the commands that are available depend on the part of the file

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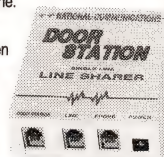
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being worked on. If a graphic is being worked on, the graphic commands are available, and when the user moves to another section of the document, for example, the main text, the text features are enabled.

There are many insets available for EZ, the main ones being equations, tables (spreadsheets), figures (drawings), and graphics (GIFS, JPEGs). Andrew insets can consist of other insets as well: for example, each cell in a table can hold a different inset. Andrew insets can also run as stand-alone programs.

Many styles and formats are supplied. You can also create your own customised styles, using the Style-Editor. Spell checking, templates, and print previewing are also available. For those who enjoy programming, Andrew offers a scripting language that you can use to add your own features to EZ, and to other Andrew programs.

Messages, the multimedia mail agent

Messages users have been able to send and read mail that includes text, graphics, and other embedded objects for some time. The only problem is that both sender and recipient need to have Messages installed to do so.

Messages (Figure 2) has three sections. The first contains a list of folders, to organise your mail as it comes through; the middle section lists messages in the current folder; the final section displays a selected message.

Within Messages you can compose mail or reply to others by invoking the appropriate menus. When composing mail, another window pops up (Messages-Send), divided into a mail header section and main body section. The main body is basically an inset (EZ), so whatever features are available in EZ are also available here.

When replying to mail, the header section is prefilled. Further headers can be added by invoking the appropriate menu sequence, or from keyboard short-cuts (many menu options have corresponding keyboard short-cuts). If your mail headers are elaborate, you may wish to consider using Andrew's scripting language. To do so, simply create a menu entry that when clicked, adds all relevant information to the mail's header section. Along with Andrew's documentation browser, you can use many of the helpful files that come with the Andrew distribution to assist with this sort of adaptation.

I had difficulties when I first used Messages. Messages uses the operating system's mail transport agent: every mail message had its From header marked with my Linux login name and hostname. In my case, my hostname is fictional. It only exists on my machine, I do not have a permanent Internet presence. Like other Melb PC members, I have an IP address assigned to me, dynamically, when I log on. This meant people replying to my mail, using the reply

feature of their e-mail programs, would have found their reply bounced back to them. Their messages could only get to me if they inserted my actual e-mail address in the To field. I partially overcame this by creating a menu entry that added Reply-To and Organisation headers, but sometimes that was not enough, it was too easy to forget to use the menu feature.

What I needed to be able to do was to insert my real e-mail address in my e-mail message headers. That's what I did, eventually. With some guidance from the Andrew bulletin board, I wrote a simple program that traps mail created from Messages and inserts a valid From header, along with further information, before passing it to the system's mail agent to be processed.

To automate mail retrieval, I have organised my system to automatically fetch it every 15 minutes when I am logged onto my ISP. When new mail arrives, a mail box pops up with a flag raised within another Andrew program that monitors my system (Console).

Concluding remarks

A criticism of Linux during its infancy was that there were not many quality word processing programs available for it. Andrew fills that void, and offers more. It's not just a word processing program, it's a whole system with which you can create and send multimedia documents. Further, like Linux, Andrew is free. □

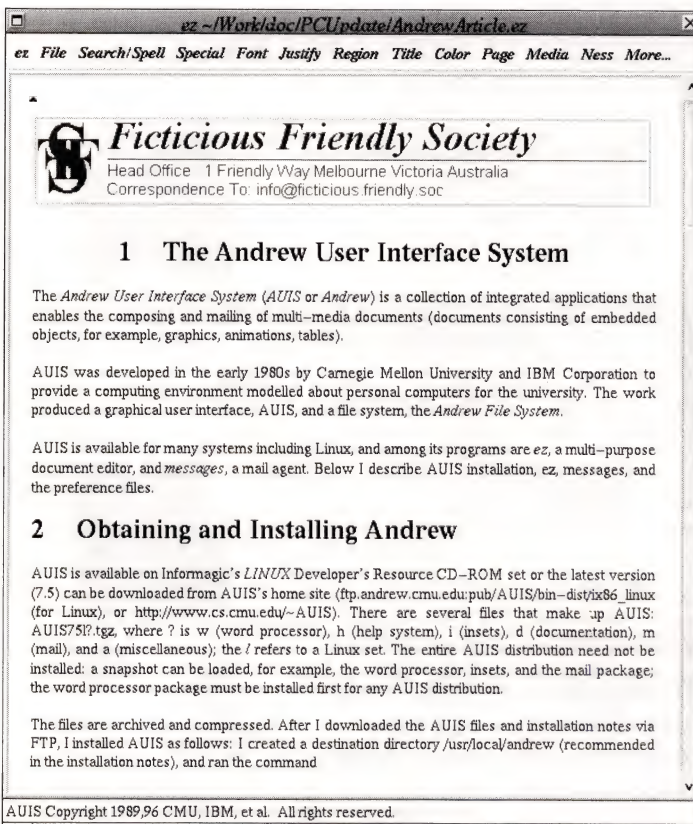


Figure 1. Creating a document with EZ

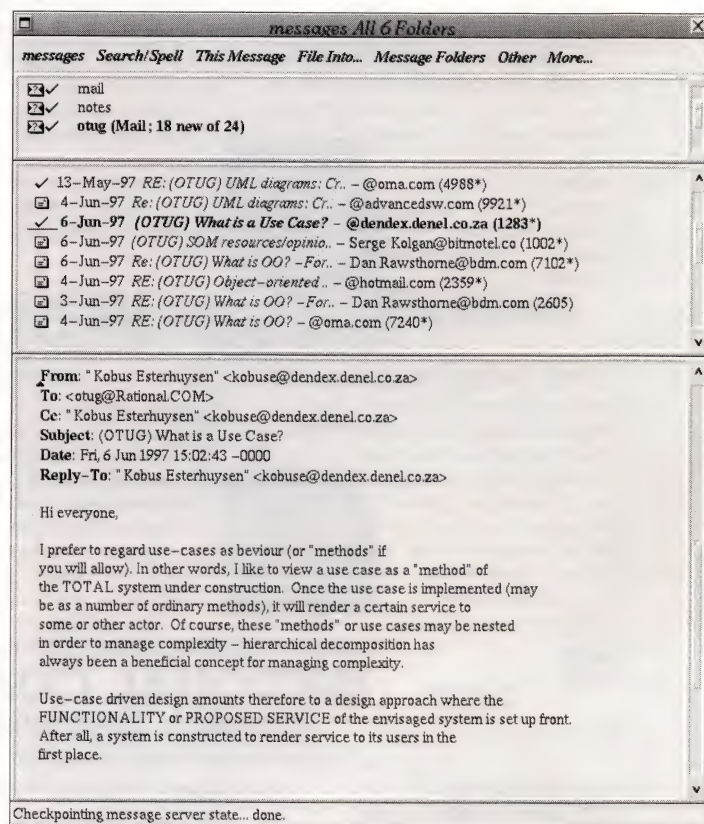


Figure 2. The Messages three-part screen

Mind your language

32
/
64

<>

1

BIGGER & BETTER BUGS

Ron Kitchenn

marketing

shouts, whereas

measurement

only whispers

To err (in software) is human. In a recent article* Dr Les Hatton wrote "... if programmers really try to screw things up, the language isn't going to stop them".

He was referring to the disastrous launch of the Ariane 5 rocket, in which the programmers took a 64-bit floating-point number and "jammed it into a 16-bit integer without checking to see if it could be correctly represented or not". And the language used was ADA, "the darling of the safety-critical industries".

In 1992, Shuttle Endeavour had difficulties in attempting to rendezvous with the damaged Hughes F/6 Intelsat satellite. This, he says, was due to a similar fault, which the programming language did not prevent: the programmers had inadvertently placed a 64-bit floating-point number into a 32-bit floating-point number. The halving of precision amounted to a significant error in location in space.

He also tells of the disaster of 1990, when a single misplaced statement in an AT&T switching system, inserted as part of a three-line software "fix", caused the entire eastern seaboard of the USA to lose its telephones at an estimated cost of around \$1 billion.

Personal computers

Apart from such spectacular disasters, he asserts that the ubiquitous PC (and other consumer devices incorporating software) display all-too-frequent symptoms of avoidable software errors. From his own personal log of experienced errors he reports:

- **Windows 95 + Professional Office:** one defect every 42 mins; 28% reboots
- **Macintosh OS + Microsoft Office:** one defect every 188 mins; 56% reboots
- **Various flavours of UNIX:** less than one per year; no reboots
- **Linux:** none yet recorded in three months of medium load.

The Windows 95 record was from about six months use, and the defect rate was getting worse.

*Software failures—follies and fallacies
Dr Les Hatton, IEE Review, 20 March 1997, p.49

While at NASA

Despite the evolution of programming languages, the number of defects per 1000 lines of code—a common measure of software quality—has remained almost constant over the last 15 years. Dr Hatton cites figures from the journal *Business Week*, December 1991, describing the drop in software errors at NASA Goddard:

Errors per 1000 lines of code

Year	Worst	Median	Best
1976	10.5	8.5	6.0
1978	10.0	7.5	5.7
1980	9.5	7.0	5.5
1982	8.2	6.7	5.0
1984	7.8	6.3	4.5
1986	7.0	6.0	4.2
1988	6.0	5.5	4.0
1990	5.6	5.0	4.0

He claims that figures for UK software are better (but not much). With in-service software doubling (globally?) every 18 months, he predicts that software errors will also double every 18 months.

Around the world

One measure of quality is the number of "statically detectable" faults per 1000 lines of code. These are detected, using a commercially available static analysis tool, without running the programs concerned.

The article presents a distribution of 68 samples of such faults for 13 classes of commercially-released C applications around the world from 1992 to the present. The highest sample scored 24 errors/1000 lines; 20% had more than 10 errors/1000 lines.

It's a mess!

Dr Hatton asserts that the industry is in a mess, that software engineering owes more to the fashion industry than to the engineering industry, and that there is almost complete absence of any form of systematic measurement of the quality of software. And in spite of the developments in programming languages over the last two decades, "... systematic progress is effectively disabled because marketing shouts, whereas measurement only whispers".

Let's be thankful!

Our concerns as "ordinary" PC users are trivial, compared with the vital aspects of safety and costs of failure which must worry those high-budget purchasers of software vital to their, or their customers' interests. Among these would be those we trust to defend us. For them, and for those who provide the software, the possible presence of errors must be a major and costly problem.

We, on the other hand, can sit back and not feel too despondent when we discover program errors, either from experience or from learning that our Ver.n program is now superseded by Ver.(n+1). Our needs are less demanding. We realise that programmers—like many other people—are not infallible, and that each discovery of an error results in an addition to the art and should lead to an improvement in future. Let us thank the programmers who have given us the power to do what we do with our computers, and forgive them their little trespasses against us.

And as for our own home-grown examples of the programmer's art, and the frustrating hours we spend in search of those errant commas, or offences in logic—well, it's only a hobby, isn't it? □

Seeing the Basics: Customising the VB development environment

VB 5.0 TIPS AND TRICKS

Tony Stevenson



This column provides techniques, tips, and tricks to help you gain familiarity and experience with MS Visual Basic, a popular language that enables you to write quickly both Windows and World Wide Web applications.

Setting Up Your VB Workplace

People like to set up their office or business environment to match their personality and preferred style of working.

Now Visual Basic developers can do the same with their VB development environment, thanks to the different levels of customisation possible with release 5.0.

To look at some of the possibilities which are available, start a new project by clicking the Standard EXE icon located in the New Project window.

Now click the View option on the standard menu bar and drag your mouse down to the last option, Toolbars. A cascading menu then appears with the entries Debug, Edit, Form Editor, and Standard (the final option, Customize ..., will be discussed later in the article).

To begin experimenting, first make sure all the options here are not checked, that is, remove any ticks next to them. Your development environment should now consist of just Form1 and the standard menu bar at the top of the screen (this menu bar is always present as it is not possible to delete it). Depending on your current set up, the tool box and Project Explorer window might also be visible. If so, close them.

Note that for convenience, the Toolbars menu can also be more quickly displayed

by right-clicking on an unused part of the standard menu bar.

Now bring up the Toolbars menu using either of the approaches just described. When the Standard option is clicked, the Standard toolbar is displayed directly below the standard menu bar. Because of the Standard toolbar's convenience when developing and testing applications, most developers will always have it displayed in this position.

However, it can be moved if desired. Click on, and then drag the two raised vertical parallel bars located on the left end of the toolbar. Notice that if you drag the toolbar to the middle of your desktop, the toolbar is automatically given its own title bar. Now to further re-position the toolbar, you can either click and drag its title bar or alternatively an unused part of the toolbar itself. When you drag the toolbar to the edges of your desktop (by going as far as you are permitted), the title bar automatically disappears.

Now you can follow the same procedure with the other toolbars available on the Toolbars menu option, and experiment to find out what works best for you.

Here's a tip for quickly moving a toolbar to an edge of your desktop. Simply double click its title bar using the left mouse button.

And getting rid of a toolbar is easy too. Right click on its title bar or an unused portion of the toolbar itself (or even a greyed part of the toolbar) and then turn off the appropriate toolbar's check mark.

Dockable Windows

Dockable windows are another way in which you can easily customise your VB development environment.

Dockable windows can be moved around, and they attach themselves to the edges of your desktop or to the sides of other dockable windows.

To see which dockable options are already set up for your development environment, click the Tools option on the standard menu bar, and then click the Options ... item. Now click the Docking tab.

There are nine dockable windows—Immediate window, Locals window, Watch window, Project Explorer, Properties window, Object Browser, Form Layout, Toolbox and Color Palette.

The dockability for any one of these windows can be turned on by checking its associated check box.

The concept of dockable windows is hard to describe with words, so the best way to understand this aspect of customisation is to experiment.

Try this. Make sure the dockable check box for the tool box on the Docking tab is checked. Now make the tool box visible (if it isn't, click View on the standard menu bar, and then select the Toolbox option). Then click on its title bar using the left mouse button, and drag it around the desk top. Watch what happens when you move the tool box near the edges, or close to another dockable window.

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Creating Your Own Toolbar

Using VB 5.0, it is a straightforward process to create your own development environment toolbar.

Right click the standard menu bar and then choose the Customize ... option. When the Customize window appears, click the New ... button in the top right hand corner (however make sure the Toolbars tab has been selected first).

VB 5.0 now asks you to enter in a name for your toolbar. Type My Toolbar and click the OK button to create it.

Click the title bar of your new toolbar and drag it out of the way towards the bottom of the screen. Notice that you cannot resize your new toolbar yet, even though resizing arrows appear when you place the mouse cursor on its edges.

The next step is to set up the contents of My Toolbar.

The Customize dialog box is still open so click on its Commands tab. This tab has been divided into two parts. The left hand side lists the different categories of commands whilst the right hand side shows those commands available within a particular category. For example, click on Debug in Categories, and the familiar Debug commands—Step Into, Step Over, Step Out, and so on, are shown in the Commands list box.

To add a command from any category to your new toolbar, do the following. Locate the desired command so that it is displayed in the right hand side list box. Then click and drag it onto your newly created My Toolbar.

Each time you repeat this procedure with a new command, My Toolbar is automatically increased in size to cater for the latest one. When you have finished adding commands to My Toolbar, click the Close button on the Customize dialog box.

Now you have a fully personalised toolbar complete with tooltips.

Right click the standard menu bar, and there is the new toolbar listed along with the Debug, Edit, Form Editor, and Standard toolbars. Click the Customize ... option, and then the Toolbars tab. Click the My Toolbar entry, and you now have buttons at your disposal to rename or delete it.

The power and flexibility to customise your development environment in this way is just another reason why Visual Basic stills remains so popular with millions of developers around the world.

And the amount of customisation discussed here is just a small fraction of what can be done with VB. So if you are prepared to experiment, you'll finish up with a VB development environment suited to your own preferred style of working.

Email address

Contact Tony Stevenson by email at acsmls@acslink.net.au

A Passel of Peters' Pointers Pertaining to PCs

...WITH A BOB & KELVIN

(edited for your reading pleasure)

On Thu, 12 Jun 1997 21:10:59 GMT, peterh@melbpc.org.au (Peter Hooper) wrote:

....snip

> Since installing Lotus Suite 97 a couple of
 > months ago, the dial-up window comes up
 > automatically at start-up. The icon does NOT
 > appear in the Start Up group and despite
 > scanning, numerous times, every link that I can
 > find or even imagine, I cannot find from where
 > the dial-up window is receiving its instruction to
 > load. I have tried reinstalling Win 95 without
 > solving the problem. Can anyone throw any light
 > on how to stop it coming up, please?

=====

Hi Peter H, Peter H here,

I have just done the same in installing Lotus SmartSuite 97 and your posting has preempted mine by a day or so. Unfortunately I cant give you an answer, just reinforce that it is a bloody nuisance on start up. Your right, I have looked everywhere and cant find any shortcut. BTW I did try to delete the Internet Drawer in the controls, but to no avail, DUN keeps coming up.

....snip

Cheers,
 Peter Huttemeier peterhut@melbpc.org.au

=====

On Fri, 13 Jun 1997 05:39:38 GMT, peterhut@melbpc.org.au (Peter Huttemeier) wrote:

> On Thu, 12 Jun 1997 21:10:59 GMT,
 > peterh@melbpc.org.au (Peter Hooper) wrote:

> Hi Peter H, Peter H here,

Hi Peter H, Hi Peter H, Peter H here, Thanks gents, I shall not install the offending Lotus suite. Hopefully hours helping hapless hopefuls hit historical highs! Hysterical hapologies!

Peter Hersch hershy@melbpc.org.au

=====

On Fri, 13 Jun 1997 23:33:26 GMT, in melbpc.general bobt@melbpc.org.au (Bob Thomas) wrote:

> On Fri, 13 Jun 1997 12:35:39 GMT,
 > hershy@melbpc.org.au (Peter Hersch) wrote:

>> On Fri, 13 Jun 1997 05:39:38 GMT,
 >> peterhut@melbpc.org.au (Peter Huttemeier)
 >> wrote:

>>> On Thu, 12 Jun 1997 21:10:59 GMT,
 >>> peterh@melbpc.org.au (Peter Hooper)
 >>> wrote:

>>> Hi Peter H, Peter H here,

>> Hi Peter H, Hi Peter H, Peter H here,

>> Hopefully hours helping hapless hopefuls hit
 >> historical highs! Hysterical hapologies!

> A Plethora of Peters Plainly Posting Problematical
 > Problems & Postulating Possible Practical
 > Panaceas...

=====

From: "Carol Daniels" <cad@melbpc.org.au>
 To: Peter, Peter, Peter and Bob

If Peter, Peter, Peter and Bob don't mind I'd like to pinch this to use as a humorous piece in PC Update...

Of course I may have to ask again, should any more of our playful members pitch in.

Carol Daniels

=====

From: "Peter Hersch" <hershy@melbpc.org.au>

> If Peter, Peter and Bob don't mind I'd like to
 > pinch this to use as a humorous piece in
 > PC Update...

Holly hullabaloo,
 Heartening hearing "herself", head harbinger,
 heavenly heterosexual heroine happily hee-hawing
 hooligans' highly humorous homily.

Half Hungarian, Hershy himself.

PS. Is there another word for thesaurus
 PPS. Other half is Romanian — Transylvanian to be exact.

=====

From: peterhut@melbpc.org.au (Peter Huttemeier)

Hi Carol,

No this one of the problematical Peters don't mind. It seems I will have to look up my thesaurus and find something to quote back to the other ones!

Cheers, Peter H

Peter Huttemeier <peterhut@melbpc.org.au>

=====

From: "Bob Thomas" <bobt@melbpc.org.au>

Hi Carol,

Quote away no objection here! 8*)

> Of course I may have to ask again, should any
 > more of our playful members pitch in.

Ahhh... if only there were more of 'em 8*)

Bob Thomas



What does membership of Melb PC offer you?

BENEFITS OF BELONGING



Strength

Melbourne PC User Group Inc. has over 11,500 members and is the largest PC User Group in the world. It was founded in 1983, and is still run for its members, people like you.

The Group employs full-time office staff and some part-time help. Some services are provided by contractors, but the other functions of the club—magazine writing and editing, online services maintenance; collection and distribution of shareware; organisation of SIG and monthly meetings and more, is performed by volunteers.

The Group today proudly has a membership of people from all walks of life and with a broad range of computer skills. With this vast store of knowledge, members have access to information and help in numerous fields—programming, software solutions, DOS and Windows, communications, to name just a few.

Magazine

Melb PC's magazine, *PC Update*, is sent to members 11 times a year. *PC Update* publishes articles written by members and all members are welcome, indeed encouraged, to write articles on a subject they know about, to share with others. *PC Update* occasionally reprints articles from overseas user groups, to keep Melb PC members as up-to-date as possible.

PC Update has won awards in each of the last six years in the International User Groups' Newsletter Contest. Some of the many awards it has won are "Best Feature Articles," "Best Publication," "Best Features and Reviews," and "Best Columnist." It has also been runner-up in "Best Publication" and "Best Layout and Design." Many people join the Group just for the value *PC Update* provides, well worth the annual membership fee on its own, and then discover all the other benefits of membership.

A year's membership of Melb PC, which includes having *PC Update* delivered to you, costs about as much as it does to buy a year's issues over the counter.

Computer First-Aid and Dial Help

This unique service is made available free to members simply because volunteers within the Group give their time and knowledge to assist with any computing problems you may have. About 300 telephone numbers of unpaid volunteers, with day- and night-time contacts, are mailed to members with their *PC Update*. The service covers over 120 separate topics.

Training

The Group provides training in a diverse range of computer skills, from starting with computers to advanced programming.

Melb PC has its own fully-equipped training centre, using networked Pentium systems. Courses are run as a service to members, making them very cost-competitive when compared to similar courses elsewhere.

Students learn in a classroom environment with one computer per student. Courses include applications (such as Quicken, Excel and Word), BBS and Internet usage, and operating systems such as DOS and Windows.

Most classes are run in the evenings or at weekends, when parking is readily available. The Club's rooms are also easily accessible by public transport.

All courses provide suitable training material and support and a list of courses on offer to members appears in each issue of *PC Update*.

Monthly Meeting

Each month, except January, Melb PC holds a meeting, open to members and visitors. The meeting is usually addressed by representatives from the computer industry on topics of general interest. They frequently give away samples of software and other products. These speakers include many from Australian vendors and distributors—we have also been privileged to be addressed by CEOs such as Bill Gates, Philippe Kahn, Gordon Eubanks and others who made special visits to address our members.

There is also the ability to address questions to the membership at large, seeking advice or problem-solving. Shareware and diskettes are sold and members socialise and discuss anything that takes their fancy—even computers!

Following the meeting many members gather for a meal, arranged at a convenient restaurant, at "user-friendly" prices.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The Group has SIGs covering many aspects of computer use. A SIG can deal with any topic relating to personal computing, ranging from particular applications to hardware and programming, or how to get the best from your equipment.

There are also regional SIGs, for members in outlying geographical areas.

A list of meeting dates, places and contacts for SIGs is published each month in *PC Update*, with reports of past and future activities. All SIG meetings are available to any member.

Bulletin Board

Melb PC operates a free 23-hours-a-day bulletin board system (BBS) as another member service. The BBS, running on 34 lines, is the biggest OS/2-based BBS in the world.

The BBS has two main functions—electronic mail and message exchange, and file transfer facilities. The mail and messaging facilities enable members to exchange messages with each other and to seek help on a wide range of topics, not only from other members but also from the world-wide PC community. This service gives BBS users access to an enormous pool of experience and talent on a vast array of subjects. If you have a problem, put a message on the BBS and, more often than not, it's answered in a day or so!

The BBS carries many files on a range of topics. These have been uploaded by members who found them useful and can be downloaded by other members. They include many useful utilities and the latest versions of shareware software, often obtained from overseas BBSs before appearing in other Australian outlets.

Internet Service

The club provides access to a 127-line full-featured Internet service, providing access to Usenet, ftp, irc, www, gopher and telnet.

SLIP/PPP accounts are provided. This popular service is being expanded and enhanced to serve a larger number of members.

Software Library

Melb PC maintains an extensive and up-to-date software library of programs (over 1300 disks, with about 50 new disks added each month) for IBM-type personal computers, obtained from around the world. This library of shareware software is available only to Melb PC members and is supplied on new disks at very low prices.

An order form for this software is in every issue of *PC Update*.

Shareware Registration

Much of the most popular software on Melb PC's Bulletin Board and in its software library is shareware, i.e. try free and pay only if you like and use it.

The club organises bulk shareware registrations, usually at a substantial discount.

Club-organised registrations also save members the costs of US-dollar bank drafts and overseas postage. □

MELB PC Membership Application/Renewal

Personal details

Membership number (if renewing)

Title Mr Mrs Miss Ms Dr Oth. Ref: PCU 0897

First name Middle initial

Last name

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Postcode

Country

Business phone ()

Home phone ()

Job title

Employer

I do ☐ / do not ☐ want to receive occasional promotional mail from commercial organisations.

I hereby apply for membership of Melbourne PC User Group Inc. and agree to abide by its rules while I am a member. Signature Date

Membership details

Type New Renewal Amount

Individual (extra family members at \$10 each)	\$60	<input type="text"/>	\$50	<input type="text"/>	\$	<input type="text"/>
	\$10	<input type="text"/>	\$10	<input type="text"/>	\$	<input type="text"/>
Corporate (two representatives, extra representatives at \$60 each)	\$130	<input type="text"/>	\$120	<input type="text"/>	\$	<input type="text"/>
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Student or Pensioner (see notes)	\$50	<input type="text"/>	\$40	<input type="text"/>	\$	<input type="text"/>
	\$50	<input type="text"/>	\$40	<input type="text"/>	\$	<input type="text"/>

Notes:

- Students must attach a photocopy of student card or letter from educational institution confirming *full-time* student status.
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Total \$

Training order form

Course Title

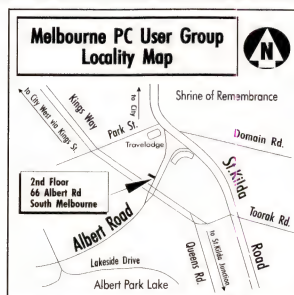
Starting Date

Amount

Total:

Members' discounts

If you are a member or advertiser offering a discount on goods or services to Melb PC members, on production of their membership cards, please contact the office to register your offer, which will then be listed in future issues of *PC Update*.



For membership application or renewal, or training orders, please use the remittance and/or credit card form on the next page

Top choice shareware

These are some of the most popular volumes in the Melb PC Shareware/Freeware library. Refer to the regular catalogue updates in *PC Update* for up-to-date listings of other disks—use the lower part of this order form for your choice from those listings.

Shareware/PD Title	Melb No.	Format	Qty	Amount
Shareware Catalogue & New Member Disk	0000	3.5 / 5.25		
Graphics Workshop for DOS	8015	3.5		
Graphics Workshop for Windows 3.x	8064	3.5		
Graphics Workshop for Windows 95	8562	3.5		
Growit	8157	3.5		
List	1490	3.5 / 5.25		
McAfee VirusScan for DOS	8018	3.5		
McAfee VirusScan for Windows 3.x (2-disk set)	8626/27	3.5		
McAfee VirusScan for Windows 95 (2-disk set)	8664/65	3.5		
MS-DOS 6.22 Stepup from 6.0 (3-disk set)	8110-12	3.5		
PKZip/PKUnzip	1235	3.5 / 5.25		
Real Audio Player for Windows 3.x	8364	3.5		
Real Audio Player for Windows 95	8592	3.5		
Telix for DOS	8062	3.5		
Telix for Windows v1.00 (2-disk set)	8129/30	3.5		
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Melb PC Internet kits (special prices)				
Windows 3.x @\$10 per set (3-disk set)	8711-13	3.5		
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Postage/Packing is included Costs: first disk (per order) \$5, second disk \$4, third and subsequent disks \$3 each				Total: <input type="text"/>
I am <input type="checkbox"/> under 15 years of age Signature: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> under 18 years of age <input type="checkbox"/> over 18 years of age				

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Generic preformatted 3.5-inch HD (1.44 MB)	\$5.00	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Postage and packing \$5 per order:			\$5.00
Enclose a cheque or use the credit card authority below			Total: \$ <input type="text"/>

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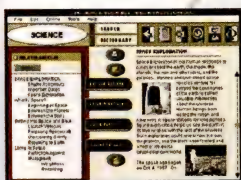
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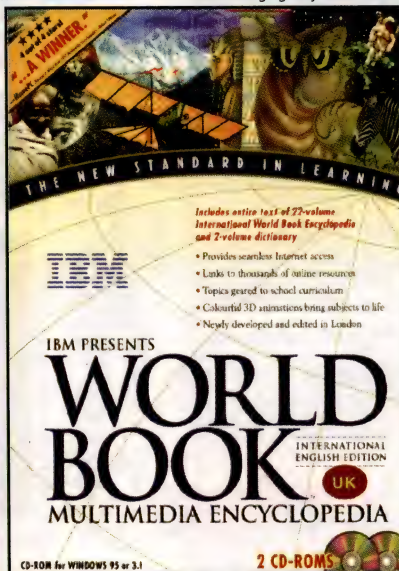
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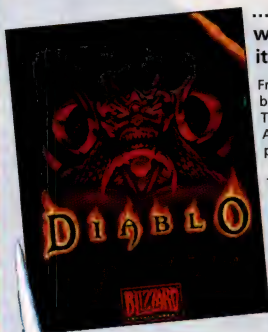
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Designed for
Microsoft
Windows 95

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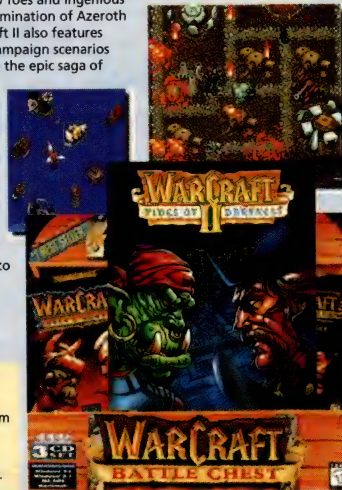
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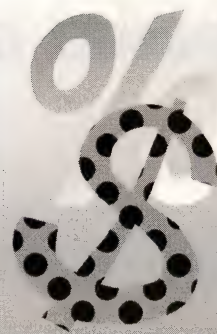
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10%—computer books.

Computer Book Company

Mt. Evelyn
Ph: 9737 0411
Fax: 9737 0433
20%—all computer books, mail order.

Cybec Pty Ltd

Hampton
Ph: 9521 0655
Fax: 9521 0729
10%—Vet antivirus software.

Dymocks, Shop 2

Melbourne
Ph: 9663 1344
Fax: 9663 1581
10%—computer books, no magazines.

Dymocks

Brighton
Ph: 9592 1911
Fax: 9592 1611
10%—computer books.

Dymocks

Westfield Shopping Town, Doncaster
Ph: 9848 7209
Fax: 9848 7307
10%—computer books.

Dymocks

Frankston
Ph: 9770 0300
Fax: 9770 0400
10%—computer books.

Dymocks

Fountain Gate
Ph: 9796 6459
Fax: 9796 6509
10%—computer books.

Dymocks

Pran Central, Prahran
Ph: 9510 2100
Fax: 9519 2520
10%—computer books.

Trevor Gibbs

Melton
Ph: 9743 8917
15%—books: *Windows Whys and Easy DOS It*, \$16.95 each, \$32 for both. Incl diskettes.

ITS Information Technology

Systems
Greenvale
Ph/fax: 9333 2197
20%—computer books, Educational Software.

Mace Booksellers and Stationers

Mount Waverley
Ph: 9807 1899
10%—computer books.

McGills Authorised

Newsagency
Melbourne
Ph: 9602 5566
10%—computer books.

Polyester Books

Fitzroy
Ph: 9419 5223
Fax: 9419 5451
10%—on all fiction, science, computer & non-fiction titles, magazines, comics & T-shirts.

RMIT Bookshop

Melbourne
Ph: 9663 5855
Fax: 9663 7528
10%—all books.

Technical Book and Magazine Company

Melbourne
Ph: 9663 3951
10%—computer books.

The Worsley Press

Rutherglen
Free call: 1800 622 805
Ph/fax: (060) 32 8122
10%—& free postage.

Other services

Adept Accounting and Taxation

Mill Park
Ph: 9436 7604
10%—on all taxation return preparation & business accounting services.

Express Bookkeeping

Carnegie
Ph: 9563 4770
Fax: 9563 4477
10%—on all bookkeeping & financial management services.

Mediware Applications

Camberwell
Ph: 9889 9234
Fax: 9889 9236
5%—(purchase), 10% on training and installation of Dental, Medical (including MedClaims) & Allied Professional Patient Management & billing software.

Min Thong Lee

c/- AP Insurance Brokers
Queen St, Melbourne
Ph: 9602 1869
Fax: 9602 1876
5%—life insurance, loans, home & contents, motor, commercial.

Michaels Camera and Video

Melbourne
Ph: 9670 1333
Fax: 9670 0074
up to 10%—on digital cameras, scanners, Internet video conferencing, scanning bureau.

Mike McKeon Music

Dingley Village
Ph: 9551 7363
5%—on our Octet or 10% on a 14 pce. Big Band & two vocalists. Discount off Musicians' Award rates. For Dinner dances, weddings, balls & special events.

Newtech R&D

Kilsyth
Ph/fax: 9723 7535
10%—on electronics consumer product design & Japanese translation.

Stewart Smith, Australian Commercial Credit

Licensed Insurance Brokers
Ph: 9816 3264
Fax: 9816 3270
25%—off normal costs. Leasing Equipment & cars. Home/commercial mortgage loans.

Tortoise Head Guest House

French Island
Ph: (03) 5980 1234
Fax: (03) 5980 1222
10%—on accommodation, fully catered, adjacent bay.

Quarter Deck B&B

San Remo
Ph: (03) 5678 5485
Mob: 018 550 235
E-mail: rosco@melbpc.org.au
20%—on B&B stays of two nights or more. Great views and close to many tourist attractions.

Ultimate Business Service Opportunities

Strathmore
Ph: 9483 4417
Fax: 9374 2919
25%—on travel cards that allow 50% off world-wide hotels. 12 month g'tee. □

Special interest group meetings

**MELB
PC
USER GROUP**



CLUB ACTIVITIES

Access (Database)

Ray Watson

(03) 9883 4382 AH
Fax: (03) 9576 9591
2nd Monday, 6.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Assembly & Other Languages

Felix Hofmann

felix@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9523 5400 AH
1st Thursday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Ballarat

Ken Smith

kensmith@giant.bnc.com.au
1st Thursday, 7.30 pm
(03) 5332 7851 BH & AH
(except school holidays)
Ballarat & Clarendon
College, Junior School
Campus
614 Mair St, Ballarat

Bendigo

Russell Collins

(03) 5439 3708
2nd Wednesday, 7.30 pm
Girton Grammar School
(Computer Room)
105 Mackenzie Street,
Bendigo
(Vine Street entrance)

C/C++ Programming

Ken Holmes

(03) 9583 1504 BH & AH
4th Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Clarion

Alan King

(03) 9882 8044 BH
4th Wednesday, 6.30 pm
Suite 9,
96 Camberwell Road,
East Hawthorn
(Through wire gate and
up the stairs on the
south-east side of
Roseberry St)

Communications

Philip Lew

(03) 9822 2998 BH
(Brief calls please)
2nd Wednesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Daytime

Felix van Lier

Felixvl@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9525 3962 BH & AH
Deputy convener:
Brian Taylor
2nd Thursday, 10.00 am
Melb PC SIG Room

East

Keith Lane

keithln@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9762 6644 Anytime
(03) 9761 1414 Fax
Ian Paterson
(03) 9755 2238
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
Gas and Fuel Theatre
200 Rooks Road, Vermont

East Workshop

Keith Beresford

keith@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9726 9145 AH
2nd Sunday, 10.30 am
Gas and Fuel Theatre
200 Rooks Road, Vermont

Freeware and Shareware

Doug Westcott

dougw@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9898 2765 AH
Co-convener: Tony James
3rd Tuesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Graphics

Yahya Abdal-Aziz

(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
Asst convener:
Kevin Gorie
3rd Monday, 7.45 pm
We meet in the bungalow
at the rear of Nadish
Naoraji's home,
8 Park Crescent,
North Caulfield

Hardware

Felix Hofmann

felix@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9523 5400 AH
3rd Wednesday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Music

Yahya Abdal-Aziz

(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
Asst convener: Eric Best
(03) 9646 6898 AH
2nd Thursday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

New Users, Central

Graham Paul

(03) 9417 5315 AH
3rd Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

New Users, East

Doug Brooke

(03) 9822 3458 BH & AH
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
St Mark's Anglican
Church,
Cnr Canterbury & Burke
Rds, Camberwell

OS/2

John Angelico

talldad@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9544 8792
4th Tuesday, 6.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Programming

Ross Hall

(03) 5428 6470 AH
(03) 9699 4000 BH or
Andrew Callaway
acal@ozemail.com.au
(03) 9619 4067 BH
2nd Tuesday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Quicken

Viv Martin

martinv@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9583 5372 AH
4th Thursday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Retired & Interested Persons

Ken Thomas

(03) 9884 5309 BH & AH
4th (not last) Friday,
10.00 am
Lutheran Church,
25 Cypress Avenue,
Glen Waverley

UNIX

Yahya Abdal-Aziz

(03) 9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
3rd Thursday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Video Editing (Linear)

Albert Vanzet

Derek Hampson
(03) 9853 2482
4th Monday, 7.00 pm
45 Talbot Avenue,
Balwyn

Video Editing (Non-linear)

Kevin Gorie

(03) 9870 3965
2nd Monday, 6.30 pm
45 Talbot Avenue,
Balwyn

Waffle

Vince Thornton

018 171 344 or
Andrew Callaway
acal@ozemail.com.au
(03) 9619 4067 BH
"Eat-ins" after monthly
meeting.

Warragul

Gordon Ross

(03) 5623 5434 AH
1st Friday, 7.30 pm
Warragul Leisure Centre
Function Room

Western Suburbs

Robert Mead

nomad@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9312 54274th
Tuesday, 7.00 pm
Sunshine Squash Centre
(corner Kent and Stewart
Streets, Braybrook)

Windows

Mikhail Bortolotto

(03) 9888 2360 AH
1st Monday, 7.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Word Processing/DTP

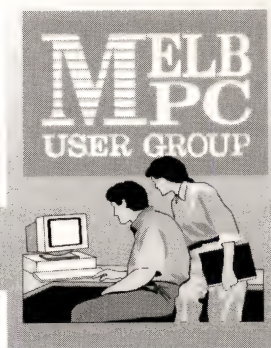
Loraine Briggs

lbriggs@melbpc.org.au
(03) 9563 6396 AH
014 693 882
4th Friday, 7.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

The Blind Citizens Support Group meets at 7.45 pm on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, at 1st Floor, 87 High Street, Prahran. For further details, please contact John Machin, on (03) 9569 1440 (BH).

SIG meeting reports

CLUB ACTIVITIES



Daytime

Felix van Lier

John Fitzimons presented an interesting overview of Windows 3.x and 95. More than 50% of members attending the Daytime SIG are now using Windows 95, a proportion that is increasing steadily.

Here's a sample of the mysteries John helped Daytimers unravel

Can I run Win 3.1 and Win 95 on separate hard drives on the same machine?

Has the latest Win 95 got dual booting facilities?

What is PartitionMagic?

Where is the best place to run an antivirus program, such as Diehard, e.g. in AUTOEXEC.BAT, and what problems does this introduce with installations or boot-up?

Is PLUS part of OEM1?

Does OEM1 give a choice of FAT16 or FAT32?

Using FAT32, can I use 16-bit files?

Can I have one partition in 16-bit and another in 32-bit?

If I use Partition Magic to convert C: to C: (16-bit) and D: (32-bit) what happens to the old D: and are there problems with old references to it?

- With Word 97 running under Win 95, can I use files in 3.1 and vice versa?
- What methods are available to back up registries?

John also demonstrated WinZip 6.2, a compression utility with a GUI, that some users find easier to use than comparable DOS-based utilities.

Many thanks John for an excellent presentation. Special thanks too, to John Mackenzie for his help with the sig report.

Looking to the future:

August

Morris Tobias, Melb PC Vice-President and CEO of Computer Rebuilds, will speak to us about the latest developments in computer hardware.

September

Leigh Hawke will demonstrate desktop publishing with MS Publisher v2.

October

The Internet, with a look at the latest offerings from Microsoft and Netscape.

Nothing stands still in the computer world, even if you are not considering a hardware or software upgrade right now, it's still important to know what is going on. There is a saying "Life was not meant to be easy" and it certainly applies to computer operations.

East

Margaret Brown

June: When our planned speaker was unable to attend, Dave Botherway stepped in and discussed the Internet. He explained the shift from "push" to "pull", and how it might influence the way we use the Internet. Using an application like Pointcast we can personalise the information we receive.

Who checks the virus checker?

As part of his question and answer segment George Skarbek expanded on the difficulties of testing whether a virus scanner is working. He suggested that if we should come across an infected disk to make a copy before wiping it. The copy could be a useful tool for a colleague wishing to test an anti-virus program.

Wiz Manager—a Windows 3.1 program that does what Windows 95 does?

Leigh Hawke assured us that his favorite shareware program could do that and more. He demonstrated many of the file management and Toolbar features. Then explained how the program can be customised for maximum efficiency.

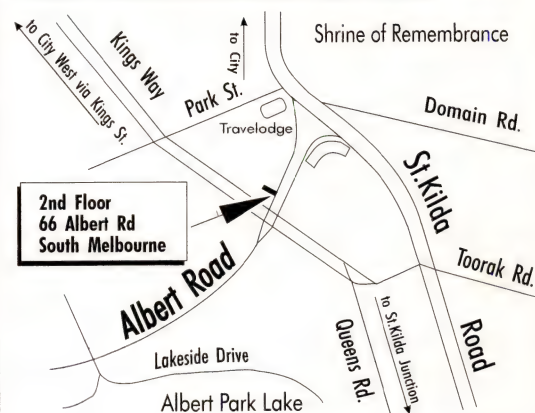
Beginning at our July meeting, Stewart Bedford started a series of talks on web page construction. Stewart does not use commercial packages, preferring to

Meetings Calendar

(Check with SIG Convener when a SIG meeting falls on a Public or School Holiday)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
First	Windows ‡		Main Monthly Meeting Waffle	Assembly & Other Languages ‡ Ballarat	
Second	Access (Database) ‡ Video Editing (non-linear)	Programming ‡ East New Users, East	Bendigo Communications ‡	Music ‡ Daytime ‡	
Third	Graphics New Users, Central ‡	Committee ‡ Freeware and Shareware ‡	Hardware ‡	UNIX ‡	
Fourth	C/C++ Programming ‡ Video Editing (linear)	OS/2 ‡ Western Suburbs	Clarion	Quicken ‡	Word Processing/DTP ‡ Retired and Interested Persons

Melbourne PC User Group Locality Map



‡ Many SIGs meet at Melb PC's premises, on the second floor at 66 Albert Road, South Melbourne.

assemble his pages line by line with the aim of reducing extraneous material.

Tip or Trick of the year award should go to Keith Beresford who showed us how to retrieve lost Microsoft installation numbers from the registry. After a system failure tedious re-installation of programs is usually necessary and can be very difficult without those essential numbers.

In his Windows 95 segment Warren Kent explained how to make our lives simpler with a customised desktop and Toolbars. He demonstrated shortcuts and other timesaving techniques for Windows 3.x and 95 and answered related questions from the floor.

Planning meetings and topics with something of interest to the wide range of computer skills and interests of our SIG members is a challenge. Suggestions for future meetings will always be considered. Contact Keith Lane (03) 9762 6644

Hardware

Bill Kessler

We would like to thank Major Keary for two books, *Upgrading and repairing PCs* by Scott Mueller (version 4) and *Hardware Bible* by Winn L Rosch.

We discussed US Robotics Courier modems, Pentium II, MMX, USB-link, infra-red link, Cyrix 686 and using your PC as a timing mechanism.

Member's hardware questions were

- Wintune 95 reports my RAM is too slow or there are too many wait states. How can I improve this?
- I have a problem with my motherboard. The PCI slots appear to be turned off. Can someone give me an idea how to make them work?

People bringing equipment in to be looked at are requested to bring as much of their computer along as possible. We do not have a workshop to supply spare parts.

OS/2

John Angelico

Lotus Domino applications: We welcomed about 15 OS/2 users, including some newcomers, along with Franz Walkow, IBM Australia OS/2 Evangelist, in June.

Nick McGuigan (IBM Australia) introduced our special topic for the evening: using Lotus Domino for real-time distribution of online information.

The demonstration led to an animated discussion of other types of real-time information distribution, including French applications—Minitel terminals and the abandonment of public transport timetables, phone books etc. It was clear that a number of attendees were impressed with the possibilities of the technology.

Product announcements: Nick and Franz announced two major products releases, the latest OS/2 release, codenamed "Bluebird" (which is designed for so-called "thin clients" aka Network Computers and Net PCs) and Sun's Java Release 1.2

(which supercedes Release 1.02 and beta release 1.1, resolving the outstanding performance and stability questions). Along with the official release of Java 1.2 comes Visual Age for Java 1.2 which provides an integrated development environment consistent with other code bases.

Open forum: There was clearly a feeling that individual users were being left behind in the rush towards corporate involvement, i.e. that the SIG is merely following IBM's lead.

We are certainly and inevitably being pushed in that direction because that is where IBM is taking OS/2 as a platform. However, we recognise that individual users still represent a significant base of intelligent power users as well as "bread and butter" users (that's not meant to be disparaging) who know what they want.

Shareware: The Melb PC BBS offers OS/2ers a range of new and improved native OS/2 shareware. Make sure that you check out the current offerings.

Future topics (planned, dates still open)

- Java and similar multi-platform applications. Corel OfficeSuite for Java
- New users special: Warp Up and running with performance and tuning tips
- Shareware reviews: various (please report back on what you would like)
- A meeting with IBM Business Partners
- Another session on OS/2 and related literature (McGills Computer Section).

Come along and add your voice to the requests for topics.

Programming

Ross Hall

April: Andrew Callaway brought some J++ Java samples. Although not strictly within the domain of the SIG, everyone is interested in the language that seems to be accelerating quicker than all others in the market place. The manual Andrew brought was unusually clear and concise, giving us Basic and Pascal hacks an excellent overview of the language. From the program CD-ROM we ran a couple of sample applications in jview (the inbuilt Java output window) and MS Explorer.

Alex Moss showed the handling of mouse events with a demonstration of a program where a button moves around the screen avoiding the mouse cursor.

David Mehlman demonstrated a metric conversion table and microwave timer written in Delphi 2. This gave us a chance to look at tabbed forms and to solve an incorrect output problem. It was a problem with uninitialised variables.

Video Editing (Linear)

Derek Hampson

June: Our first meeting at 45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn started with a BBC training video, *On Camera*, showing how to, and in some cases how not to, film and edit video footage into an interesting

and visually pleasing end product. Next up was a short "show and tell". Two of our more courageous members shared their less-than-successful editing attempts, including their attempts to overcome problems.

After the break Gavan Orford gave us an update on our SIG questionnaires. Since Albert Vanzet will be away until about mid-September, members should return their completed questionnaires to me at PO Box 618, Kew 3101.

July: At our next meeting (Monday 28 July) Ted Snell, who has many years experience on the technical side of television, including having set up the audio/visual department at Monash University, will talk to us about the structure of videotape. He'll discuss the opportunities and limitations this creates for video and audio signals, and for the hardware involved in editing.

Please note: the July and future meetings will begin at the new time of 7.00 pm.

Video Editing (Non-linear)

Kevin Gori

The first "Non-Linear" at 45 Talbot Ave, Balwyn (6.30 pm on 14 July 97) will be history by the time you read this. Laurie Weston has surprised us all by returning early from his holiday!

The room will comfortably seat 40-50 and we have a hi-fi VCR and stereo TV screen available. However, anyone who wants to show a Super VHS tape must arrange for a suitable VCR. The TV has RCA and S Video inputs. There is also a kitchen with a supply of hot water so refreshments (tea and coffee) will be available at cost.

At the time of writing, the agenda includes discussion on our monthly program for the coming year. One significant issue that has been raised in your responses to our questionnaire, is the availability of a computer for our meetings. Mine at home sprouts so many cables out the rear, and now that it is going okay, I have sworn never to disturb it until something breaks. In any event, for me, the resulting tape is what matters.

The editing subject for the evening is sound, i.e., problems, solutions and individual methods—illustrated where possible by members' tapes. I expect this to be an interesting and informative evening.

Western Suburbs

Robert Mea

The second meeting of our SIG was well attended by members living in the west.

We shared an interesting evening courtesy of Tom Coleman, who despite having just come from his sick bed, was able to share with us the intricacies of computers and computing.

Thanks to Tom for an enjoyable presentation!

Volunteers

Volunteer of the Month

The Volunteer of the Month for August is Robert Smith. Bob was elected to the committee, in December 1995, to fulfill the specialist role of property manager. At a time when it appeared our lease might be prematurely terminated, Bob acted as go-between with the agents, while at the same time constantly looking out for new premises.

While seeking a new location this year, it was only through his efforts working and negotiating with agents that we were successful in finding our new offices. Melb PC is very grateful for Bob's efforts during this time.

Volunteers wanted

Volunteers are needed to assist at Swap Meets to represent Melb PC. Just half-a-day one Sunday a month, at a meeting near you, is all that is asked: we believe you will find it rewarding.

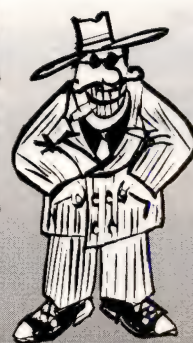
Please contact John Morris on (03) 9583 4095 or morris@melbpc.org.au if you are able to help. ☐

Members' free ads

SAVE A DOLLAR

Member-to-member deals

BARGAINS



WANTED

Book: Moving from Cobol to C by Mo Budlong, SAMS Publishing.

Vadi (03) 9587 4406

FOR SALE

Laptop battery, Toshiba PA2429U to suit 1950CT. Little used as computer mostly connected to mains. Cost over \$200 in early 1996. \$100

Charlie Sorel (03) 9899 2366

Microsoft Windows NT versions 3.51 and version 4 update (current version) on CD-ROM with supporting floppies. \$170

Norton NT tools, current version. \$60

QEMM memory manager v.7. \$40

Ken Walker: kgw@alphalink.com.au or (03) 9886 3139

Games: Destruction derby (CD-ROM). \$30
Flight Unlimited (CD-ROM). \$40
NBA Live 95 (CD-ROM). \$20
Cyberwar (4 CD-ROMs). \$30
Nascar racing (CD-ROM). \$25
Virtual Karts (CD-ROM). \$25
Car and driver (floppy disks). \$15

Dynalink external modem, 14,400 bps model 1414VQE, with power supply, cable, manuals and software all in original packaging. \$90

Netcomm external modem, 2400 bps, with power supply and manual. \$20

(03) 9587 3227

Trident 4MB DRAM VGA card. Brand new, never used, manuals included. \$30

4MB 1c DRAM card for IBM Thinkpad 750, 755, 850. IBM original. \$30

Michael AH: (03) 9830 2273,
BH: (03) 9532 3144

Advertisements from members, for Swap, Wanted, For Sale, Free, etc, are run free of charge.

All ads must be loaded as a file (NB: *not* a message) to the BBS (NB: *not* the Internet) in ASCII format to area PCUP or supplied as an ASCII file on a virus-free non-returnable MS-DOS diskette (any size) and delivered to the Group's Office.

We do not have the time to type your ads, so this service is restricted to electronic advertisements.

Infected disks are thrown out, without attempting to disinfect or recover data!

Members' ads will be included in the first available issue of *PC Update*.

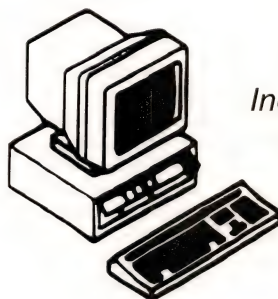
Advertisements must include at least one phone number—if you only want replies via the BBS or Internet, only advertise there.

COMPUTER REPAIRS +



"Service to all IBM and Compatible Computers, Printers, Monitors, and Peripherals. All Work Fully Guaranteed."

COMPUTER UPGRADES



"Specialists in IBM Compatible PC Upgrades, Including: Motherboard, Hard Drive, Floppy Drive, Video, Memory, Tape Back-Up Units, Processor and Multi-Media Upgrades."

- ☒ New Computers and Printers
- ☒ Enquire About Our Industry Leading Warranties
- ☒ Network / Modem Consultation and Installation
- ☒ Spare Parts, Cables, and Supplies
- ☒ On-Site or Workshop Repairs
- ☒ Prompt Service. Reasonable Rates
- ☒ Call Today For Friendly Advice

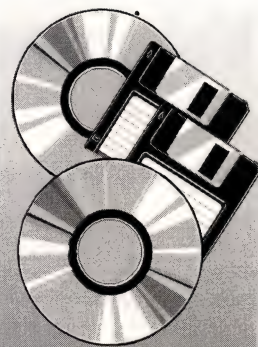
Call 9585 1645

Bayside PC Services

96 Nepean Highway, Mentone. Tel. 9585 1645

Shareware/Freeware library update

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY



Glenn Webster

Updates

Melb 0000

Melb PC Shareware catalog v4.00 and New Members disk

This disk contains the details of all of the disks in the Shareware Library of the Melbourne PC User Group. Each disk is described in the same format that you see here. This format enables us to provide more details of each disk's contents than a single line entry. It also enables you to use a program such as LIST (provided on this disk) to search for a disk or a program, by name, by number, by category, or by content. A new catalog disk will be released quarterly in the months of February, May, August, and November. The new catalog will contain details of all current disks up to the issue of PC Update for those months. This disk has been amalgamated with the New Members Disk which contains details of the Melbourne PC Users Group, its constitution, finances, special interest groups, member services, history, library, magazine, and other features of the group. A number of useful utilities have been included with the disk. All information is accessed by menu. The Catalog and New Members Disk is supplied free to new members.

Melb 2516 Catalog-On-a-Disk v4.0

Catalog-On-a-Disk is a flexible, cost-effective alternative to printed product catalogs. It provides a means for you to distribute your product catalog to your customers on floppy disks. It's easy for your customers to order from you using a few simple keys. They can browse or search for items, order as they go along and print the order form to printer or file. The order can be sent by mail, fax, modem, or phone. You just set up your catalog to give it your company's distinctive look. The opening screens, menus, and exit screens can be prepared using an ASCII text editor. The catalog files are compressed, so that you fit more products on a disk, reduce disk access time, and provide security for your prices and other data. Catalog-on-a-Disk handles shipping and sales tax too. You can import and export in ASCII delimited data base form, set colours, define a help bar and more. Sales people can keep their Catalog-On-A-Disk catalog on their notebook computer so they can take orders as they travel from site to site. This version contains a tutorial and on-disk documentation. It requires 640 KB of RAM and 500 KB of hard disk space. Regn US\$55 or A\$99.

Melb 8018

McAfee Virus Scan for DOS v3.0.2

This disk contains the McAfee antivirus programs for DOS. It contains a detection and disinfection program (SCAN) which has been provided in an uncompressed form, so that the disk can be used, as supplied, to check your hard disk, prior to installa-

tion. Remember to write-protect this floppy disk before use. The scanning program has been designed to check for pre-existing infections of known and unknown viruses on floppy, hard, CD-ROM and compressed disks on both stand-alone and networked PCs, and network file servers. Documentation is supplied on disk. VirusScan can decrypt execute-only macros, so that macro viruses that are distributed in source form and recompiled can be detected. VirusScan provides fast scanning performance and exceptional virus detection rates with its new engine. It offers maximum defense against the newest threats to data. It detects all virus types, including Word and Excel macros, boot-sector, file, multi-partite, stealth, polymorphic and encrypted viruses. This version includes new command line options for cleaning floppy disks, removal of the new LAROUX Excel spreadsheet macro virus and over 204 new viruses can be removed, making a total of 3,006 viruses in the DAT file. VirusScan for DOS requires an IBM-compatible computer with DOS 3.1 or later and at least 340 KB of free RAM. Regn US\$65.

Melb 8026

McAfee Virus Scan for OS/2 v3.0.2

This disk contains the McAfee antivirus detection and disinfection program (OS2SCAN). The programs on the disk have been provided in an uncompressed form so that the disk can be used, as supplied, to check your hard disk, prior to installation. Remember to write-protect this floppy disk before use. The scanning program has been designed to check for pre-existing infections of known and unknown viruses on floppy, hard, CD-ROM and compressed disks on both stand-alone and networked PCs, and network file servers. Since OS/2 operates in a protected mode environment OS2SCAN can only check its own area of memory or "memory image" for viruses. There is no constant TSR-type protection available in OS/2. The DOS/Windows version of VShield is included with OS2SCAN but it is only active while the system is running a DOS or Windows session. Documentation is supplied on disk. VirusScan provides fast scanning performance and exceptional virus detection rates with its new engine. It offers maximum defense against the newest threats to data. This version includes new command line options for cleaning floppy disks, removal of the new LAROUX Excel spreadsheet macro virus and over 204 new viruses can be removed, making a total of 3,006 viruses in the DAT file. VirusScan for OS/2 requires IBM OS/2 2.1 or later and at least 8 MB of RAM. Regn US\$65.

Melb 8095

TIMECALCPRO v1.3

This is a Windows-based time and date calculator. It adds, subtracts, multiplies and divides units of time (hours, minutes and seconds). It also performs date calculations. It looks and behaves like a regular calculator. It even has a running "tape" that displays all of your calculations and can be printed if required. The program can use either the key-

board or a mouse for input and there is context-sensitive help throughout. You can customise the colour, size and display formats. This version corrects some bugs that could cause incorrect calculations under some circumstances. TimeCalcPro requires Windows 3.x or later. Regn US\$10.

Melb 8367

agSI (system Information Tool) v1.2.1

This system tool (agSI) provides hundreds of items of information about your hardware system, operating system, memory, software, drives and configuration files. The program correctly detects the new CPUs, such as Pentiums, and provides detailed information from BIOSes, including Plug and Play BIOSes. agSI runs in DOS text mode but a PIF file is provided so that it can be run under Windows. Additional functions, such as changing system settings and disk formatting, increase the functionality of this tool. agSI has extensive, detailed online help. This version provides extensive Intel chipset information, has a better hard disk bench test, displays FDISK graphics and multimedia-video devices, displays more hard disk partition types, including Win95 FAT32 and correctly displays Pentium MMX commands in the Processor page. There are numerous other changes. Minimum system requirements for agSI are an 80286 processor (but an 80386 or better recommended), about 500 KB of free DOS memory and about 1.3 MB of hard disk space. A mouse is supported and agSI can be run from a floppy disk (but it will run slowly). Regn US\$23.

Melb 8440

HyperSnap DX v3.0

HyperSnap DX brings professional quality and convenient Win 95 and NT screen captures to your fingertips. Choose your own hot keys that quickly capture the entire desktop, any rectangle you outline, or the highlighted window or client, and automatically save each of your captures to a file. By default—you can even trigger new captures every x seconds and have the filename incremented. Print your capture direct from HyperSnap DX—it will expand the image to the size of the paper and margins that you set, and even add a frame, reverse or reduce the output to black and white! You can save your image as a BMP, GIF or JPEG file. Optically, GIF files can be interlaced and can include transparent back-grounds. HyperSnap DX will create JPEG files, including the new progressive form JPEGs, that are becoming popular on the World Wide Web. BMP graphics can be saved in 16, 256 K or 16 M colours. This version adds the ability to capture screens from within DirectX applications, making sure you can capture those great gaming moments with correct colour palettes, and JPEGs now have save options for a user-defined percentage of output quality and the "fade-in" format. Requires Windows 95 or Windows NT. Regn US\$2.

Melb 8592 **RealPlayer for Win 95/NT v4.00**

The RealPlayer provides real time sound over the Internet. Once you have installed the RealPlayer, it will play automatically when you select any RealAudio or RealVideo clip on a World Wide Web page. You do not need to load the RealPlayer program first. The RealPlayer only plays RealAudio and RealVideo files. It does not play .AU or .WAV files. This version adds the ability for near-CD quality (14.1 KHz) stereo sound on an ISDN internet connection. This update allows for the use of the new RealVideo standard which will enable the viewing of video across the Internet with the best possible quality. RealPlayer requires an 80486SX-33 or faster processor, 8 MB of RAM, 2 MB of hard disk space, Win 95/NT 4.0 or later, a Windows-supported sound card, a Winsock dialler and an Internet connection with a 14.4 Kbps or faster modem. For 8.8 Kbps RealAudio files, an 80486DX-66 or faster processor and a 28.8 Kbps or faster Internet connection is required. For ISDN playback a Pentium with 8 MB of RAM and a 56.6 Kbps ISDN link or faster is required. A Windows 3.x version of this program is available on disk Melb 8364.

Melb 8705 **Cool Edit for Windows 5/NT v96**

The 32-bit version of Cool Edit is a complete sound editor, manipulator and creation package using 32-bit APIs and compiled for 32-bit operation. It can synthesise just about any sound using the noise and tone generation functions along with the wave transformation functions. Any sound sample can be used as an "instrument" and set to music (like a dog barking Jingle Bells). Most popular file formats are supported, including WAV, AU, AIFF and many others. Some of the many features of this program include reverb, undo, echo, flange, stretch/pitch change, customisable toolbar, filtering, cue lists, play lists and scripts. This update incorporates faster loading and faster screen draws for Spectral analysis, higher quality sound, more file formats, exporting RealAudio files saved in other formats, cleaner noise reduction, and a new Setup/Uninstall program. Cool Edit has extensive online help. Cool Edit requires Win 95/NT, a Windows-based sound card and a mouse. Regn US\$25 for the lite version, and from US\$50 to US\$100 for full versions.

Melb 8841 **Super Notetab v2.62a (Win 95/NT)**

Super NoteTab is not just another Windows Notepad replacement! It is a multi-page text file editor that is capable of opening a very large number of files. The actual limit is determined by the amount of free system resources. Each document is displayed on a tabbed page making it easy to switch between them. A separate window, called the Document Selector, makes it easy to find a specific document when a large number of them are open. Super NoteTab can be configured to occupy a minimum of screen estate and stay on top of other applications. Context-sensitive shortcut menus provide access to all the editor's commands. The editor has powerful search and replace commands, word and character statistics, a context-sensitive help file and lots of other useful features. You can open files automatically each time you start the program or by drag-and-dropping them from Explorer. Super NoteTab uses Windows system resources sparingly. It does not modify the Windows system registry or INI files. It requires Win 95/NT. Freeware. Note: Mini Notepad (by the same author) which will handle notes and all text files is available on disk Melb 8841.

Melb 8852-8853 **Thumbs+Plus v3.0C (2-disk set)**

Thumbs+Plus is an effective, elegant and inexpensive way to locate and organise your graphic files. The program has support for almost every imaginable graphic file format as well as support for *.AVI and *.FBI files. You can add thumbnail-size pictures of the files easily by searching the entire hard disk quickly, in the background, while you work on other programs. This update includes support for new graphic file formats and sound file formats. Thumbs+Plus requires Win 95/NT 4.0, MS-Video for Windows drivers are required for .AVI/.FBI files (available on disk Melb 8159). A Windows-compatible sound card is required for sound files. Regn A\$80. This program has been re-issued as a two-disk set due to an increase in size. Accordingly disk Melb 8035 has been deleted.

Melb 8854-8856 **McAfee Virus Scan** **for Win 95 v3.1E (3-disk set)**

These disks contain the MCAFFEE ANTI-VIRUS set of programs for Win 95. These programs must be installed on your Win 95 system prior to use. Instructions have been included on the disk. Remember to write-protect these floppy disks before use. The Administrative Mode enables System Administrators to lock VirusScan95 configurations on users' systems. The ScreenScan utility will automatically scan your system for infected files when your screen saver is active. This version of VirusScan95 detects 129 new viruses and removes 112 of them. VirusScan95 requires Windows 95. Regn US\$65. This program has been re-issued as a three-disk set due to an increase in size. Accordingly disks Melb 8664 and Melb 8665 have been deleted.

Melb 8857-8858 **SmartDraw v3.11 (2-disk set)** **Melb 8859-8860** **SmartDraw 95 v3.11 (2-disk set)**

SmartDraw is an easy-to-use Windows program that enables anyone to draw great looking diagrams, flowcharts, flyers, posters, maps, invitations and other business graphics. SmartDraw provides drag and drop drawing, lines that automatically stay connected to shapes when they change size or position, text editing that automatically places text above, below or inside shapes, and shapes that grow to fit the text. A built-in library of professional-looking design styles and a large collection of built-in shape libraries and clip-art are provided also. SmartDraw works with Microsoft Office, Lotus SmartSuite, WordPerfect and other programs that support OLE, so you can insert SmartDraw drawings directly into your documents without leaving your word processor or spreadsheet. Although SmartDraw is aimed at non-graphics professionals, technical professionals will find it very useful for flowcharting and diagrams. Some of the many new features in this version include: print preview, one-step creation of common diagrams, new symbols and templates, new curved lines, user-defined zoom level and much faster library drawing. The 16- and 32-bit versions of SmartDraw share common file formats so libraries and drawings can be exchanged across both versions of the program. This version is a major bug fix release correcting problems found in version 3.03. Both programs require an 80386 or better processor, VGA graphics and 1.5 MB of hard disk space. SmartDraw requires Windows 3.x or later and a minimum of 4 MB of free memory under Windows, while SmartDraw 95 requires Win 95/NT and a minimum of 2 MB of free memory (under Win 95). Regn US\$49 and provides 1500+ additional images and tem-

plates, more capacity, more features, a printed 120 page manual and technical support. Note: Disks Melb 8246 and Melb 8458 which contained the previous versions of SmartDraw for Windows have been deleted.

New Disks

Melb 2606 Business Plan Master v3.1

Every business needs a plan in order to track its progress. Business Plan Master is a set of documents and spreadsheet templates that help you to create a professional business plan quickly and easily. Most of the work has been done for you. Just enter the information that is pertinent to your business and edit the text you want from these formatted templates. Enter your projections and the spreadsheets generate full financial reports and analysis (income statements, balance sheets, cash flow, ratios, etc.). You can save days of work and have a comprehensive business plan to show your company's growth! The files and templates supplied are designed for use by those with a basic knowledge of word processing and spreadsheets. Preferred programs for use with Business Plan Master include WordPerfect, MS Works, MS Word, MS Excel and Lotus 1-2-3. However, other competitive programs such as WordStar or Quattro Pro should be able to import these files. Business Plan Master requires an 80386 or later, Windows 3.x, 1 MB of RAM and 2 MB of hard disk space, a word processor and a spreadsheet. Regn US\$34. A professional version with a 100-page printed manual and additional templates is available for US\$44.

Melb 2607 **EditPad**

EditPad is a replacement for the standard Windows Notepad with many features. You can open as many files at a time as you need and you can change between the open files by clicking on their tabs. Block functions, such as saving parts of your text to disk, and inserting a file into the current text are available also. You can configure the open and save dialog file filters. EditPad requires Win 95 or later and 500 KB of hard disk space. Regn by Postcard.

Melb 2608 **Desktop Themes v1.3**

The Win 95 Plus! pack adds features to Windows—some really should have been included with Win 95 itself. One of these is Desktop Themes. A Theme is a collection of sounds, icons, pointers (cursors), wallpaper, colour and font settings, and a screensaver. The Desktop Themes application is a direct replacement for the Desktop Themes control panel provided with the Plus! pack. It offers the same functionality as the Plus! version with a few additional features. Even if you have Plus! you might want to consider switching to using Desktop Themes for the additional features. You will require Win 95 or later and a VGA or better graphics card and monitor.

Melb 8861 **Cookie Crusher v1.5**

Cookie Crusher is a program designed to automatically accept or reject a cookie. A cookie is encoded data that a Web site sends to your browser. This information is stored on your computer's hard drive for later retrieval. The cookie could be an identification number that tracks you from one visit to the next, the current time and date, or other piece of information. Cookies can generate profiles of your visiting habits, monitoring what pages you visit and what you like to access. They are increasingly used by advertisers to accumulate Internet user data and build user profiles. Many people consider this practice a privacy violation. Requires Win 95 or later, and works with either Netscape Navigator, Netscape Communicator and Internet Explorer. Regn \$10.

Melb 8862

The WhiteStar Homepage Wizard is designed for users who are new to web authoring and who would like to create their own homepages without going into the complexities of HTML. It has an easy-to-use and highly visual interface allows users to create web pages fast without much hassle. The HTML code generated contains comments that teach the user some of basic fundamentals of HTML tags and how they are used. Requires Windows 95 or later.

WhiteStar v2.0**Melb 8863**

Wincode enables you to send and receive binary files via e-mail (or any other ASCII-based communications system). It provides a quick and easy way to distribute programs to people all over the world. Wincode is a Windows 3.x program which converts 8-bit BINARY (EXE, COM, GIF, etc) files to 7-bit ASCII (Text) files (and vice versa) through a process known as bit-shifting. Wincode currently supports UU, XX, UUR, Base64 (MIME 1.0 conformant), BINHEX, BTOA and BOO encoding/decoding. Some of the many features of Wincode include, drag and drop support, easy-access buttonbar, automatic code type detection, a powerful scripting language, support for automatic ZIP/UNZIP and automatic virus scanning. It also handles single- and multi-file encoding and decoding. It is fully configurable. Wincode requires an 80286 or later processor, Windows 3.x/95/NT, 2 MB of RAM and about 1.8 MB of disk space (2.5 MB with the HELP file). The built-in E-Mail capabilities require a Winsoc setup and an Internet connection. Wincode is distributed as FREEWARE. The HELP file is available for a one-time fee of US\$10 but it is not required for Wincode to function correctly. Ordering the HELP file entitles you to future updates and e-mail based support.

Wincode v2.7.3**Melb 8864****QuickRef Project Assistant v1.0E**

QuickRef is a project management, record keeping, and reporting tool which enables you to quickly and accurately see "where you are" on your various projects. You can quickly record and review data on time and money spent on various ongoing projects and keep notes and "to-do" items, specific to each project. Time and money entries may be sub-divided into up to nine different categories. Data may be shared on an office network. You can use almost any existing project numbering scheme. You can use QuickRef in either a "single-user" mode, or you can use it to record items for any number of people. Notes for each project can be kept in a free-form note file. QuickRef can instantly print snapshot reports, comparative reports and project lists. Closed projects can be archived and still maintain instant access for future reference. QuickRef has user-defined screen colours, optional passcode protection and it will run on any IBM compatible under Windows or DOS. Regn US\$35.

Melb 8865**Go-Moku 95 v1.2**

This is a Win 95/NT implementation of the game of Go-Moku, which is also known as "Five-in-a-Row". Some of its features include simple rules, an unlimited undo/redo, autoplay and replay, hints and comments, sound effects and background music. Its complete, context-sensitive help system, its flexible, artificial intelligence engine and a cool interface should provide many hours of enjoyable puzzle solving. You can even change sides during a game. Requires Win 95/NT. Regn US\$5.

Melb 8866**MasterMind Typing Tutor v1.07**

MasterMind will help you to learn touch-typing quickly. This award-winning program cuts work to about a quarter of any alternative for learning to touch-type. You should be able to master the keyboard in two to six hours. The magic is in MasterMind's sensitive way of adjusting repetition for your progress. It knows when to repeat a key and when you are ready for a new key. MasterMind Typing will put appropriate instructions onscreen as you use it. Moving hands show fingering onscreen. It can teach multiple keyboards such as, Arabic, Dvorak, European, and US. It self-adapts to various symbol layouts if Windows identifies the symbols with single-byte codes as usual. The Dvorak layout increases typing speed for English about 30% by putting the more common keys in easier reach. The speed of learning with MasterMind, unlike other tutors, makes it practical to learn multiple keyboards. It requires an 80286 or later, Windows 3.x/95/NT, 1 MB of RAM, 2 MB of hard disk and EGA or better. Regn US\$36, provides a copy of version 2.x (non-shareware) with extra features. Site licences are available.

Melb 8867**Tamagotchi v1.0**

Tamagotchi is a popular game which originated in Japan. Tamagotchi, meaning "Love Egg" is a virtual pet. The original Tamagotchi was to be carried with you on a key chain. Your job was to care for the virtual pet, and in about 30 days it would grow up and fly away. It is better than the original Tamagotchi because you control when Tamagotchi exists. The aging rate is much faster (1 hour = 1 year for Tamagotchi). Requires Windows 3.x or later, 4 MB of RAM and a mouse.

Melb 8868**EDESK 97**

EDESK 97 is an Internet-friendly "global workstation" for the sophisticated SOHO/PC user and the corporate executive. You can use it in the office, at home or while on tour, to setup your electronic office and to stay in touch with anybody, anywhere. You can customise Executive Desk with holidays and other events, calendar start days, appointment history days, birthday and anniversary check, modem parameters and dialling codes. You can also set an alarm sound and an access password. EDESK 97 works with cc:Mail, MS-Mail, or MS-Exchange to facilitate communication with your workgroup on a network and with the outside world via the Internet. You can drag'n'drop incoming messages into your schedule and task lists and create outgoing messages from your EDESK schedules and task lists. You can use E-Dockets to transfer specific information, such as schedules and tasks, into a docket which can be sent via the Mail Centre over a LAN or the Internet to its destination. Wrist Portability is a feature to export reminders, schedules, phone numbers and anniversaries to a Timex-150 watch by simply holding the watch in front of the screen. (This feature requires the Timex Data Link software v2.0 or higher supplied with the Watch). EDESK 97 requires a PC, VGA monitor, 2 MB of hard disk space and Windows 3.x/95. Regn US\$60.

Melb 8869**EZ-Split**

EZ-Split is an easy-to-use file splitter for Windows. The purpose of EZ-Split is to take a huge file and split it across multiple diskettes. Some of EZ-Split's features include splitting a file from a hard disk to any floppy and easily re-joining split files. EZ-Split is very customisable. It is great for archiving large files to diskette in case the need to restore arises. It is also useful for transporting large files between computers. It requires an 80386 or faster processor, Windows 3.x or later and 700 KB of hard disk space.

Melb 8870**Mini Notepad v1.8B (Win 3.x/95)**

Mini Notepad is a versatile, multi-page text file editor that covers all of the features available in Notepad. Each document is displayed on a tabbed page making it easy to switch between many files. The editor can be configured to occupy a minimum of screen space and stay on top of other programs. Context-sensitive shortcut menus provide access to commands. Mini Notepad makes it easy to open frequently used files; it can do so automatically each time you start the program. You can open files by drag-and-drop from files from File Manager or Explorer. Mini Notepad has been optimised to handle notes and small text files. It has been designed to use minimal Windows system resources. As a result, you can safely keep the program open all the time, even if you have many files open. This disk contains 6-bit and 32-bit versions. It requires Windows 3.x/95/NT. Freeware. Note: you need to edit large, multi-megabyte text files, with Win 95, use Super NoteTab (available on Melb 884) which can edit files as large as memory permits).

Melb 8871**Regclean v4.**

Regclean is a program that cleans up your Win 95 registry. It first scans the registry for different problems, such as Class Identifiers, Interface Identifiers and Library Identifiers. After it has finished scanning you will be prompted to fix any errors found. The program also enables you to undo the corrections you have made. It requires Win 95 and a mouse.

Melb 8872**Revival v1.**

Revival is a program that revives files in hard disk which has been completely destroyed by two possible means. An infected boot sector, in the partition table, the FAT, and the root directory or if you have accidentally formatted your hard disk. The author of Revival claims that the software can help you revive the files easily, provided that they remain somewhere on the hard disk. It requires Win 95 or later and an 80386 or faster processor.

Melb 8873-8874**SANDRA v1.10 (2-disk set)**

SANDRA is a Win 95 diagnostic utility similar to System Information utility in Norton Utilities and PC Tools. This program includes many features and shows undocumented system information, as well as the usual diagnostic features. A help file explains the meaning of most of the terms used. Sandra can create e-mail and faxes, and it can print system reports. It requires an 80386 or faster processor, Win 95/NT 4.0 or later and a mouse.

Melb 8875**WinSafe 95 v3.21**

WinSafe 95 saves all vital information and restores your Win 95 system back to operating condition when you find yourself in Safe Mode or a crash. It gives you quick access to all the files and utilities that you need to recover. It restores your registry and other vital files in a second. You can even recover from the DOS prompt (if you get locked out of Windows) by simply typing the word "WINSAFE". WinSafe95 comes with all the tools and information needed to restore. It is easier to use than Microsoft Error Recovery Utility. WinSafe95 informs you when your system files change and you need to backup. You can even reinstall Win 95 from the DOS prompt using your cabinet files. This is a must for Win 95 users, especially if you do not know how to restore hidden files, registry file, boot files and files with attributes. This program does it all and walks you through fixing your problem. Requires an 80386 or later processor, 2 MB of RAM, 2 MB of hard disk space and Win 95. Registered users can obtain free tech support if they crash! Regn US\$25.

Melb 8876-8877

CD Box Labeler v1.3 (2-disk set)

CD Box Labeler is a CD jewel box label program. You can edit text, use every font and font size installed on your system, load images to be displayed on your CD label and change colours to make your CD labels more personalised. CD labels are even better if you use a colour printer when you print your labels. Now you don't need to load your favourite graphic utility to edit your CD-labels. With CD-Box Labeler you can do prepare a professional CD box label within one minute you can print an unlimited number of copies. It requires Win 95 or later and a printer with Windows-based drivers. Regn US\$2.

Melb 8878-8879

MainActor v1.00 (2-disk set)

MainActor is a modular multimedia processing package. You can load, edit, play and save or convert all major animation and the most common picture formats. MainActor will load and save AVI, Quicktime, FLI/FLC Animations, GIF-Anim, MPEG-II and WAV files, as well as BMP, JPEG, GIF, PCX, TARGA and IFF graphics files. Sound can be saved inside IFF and Quicktime video files. MainActor requires Win 95/NT 4.0 or later, 8 MB of RAM and DirectX 3.0 installed correctly to work. Regn US\$60.

Melb 8880

NeoBook for Win 95/NT v3.1

NeoBook for Windows is a powerful authoring system for disk-based books, interactive catalogs, newsletters, kiosks, training materials, etc. NeoBook's intuitive graphical interface makes it easy to combine pictures, sounds, video, special effects, text and other elements to produce sophisticated multimedia applications. Finished publications can be compiled into stand-alone 32-bit Windows applications which may be distributed royalty-free. Some features not found in the DOS version include a 32-bit compiler that creates stand-alone Windows applications complete with a custom installation program, Expanded file support, including BMP, PCX, JPEG, PNG, TIF, ICO, AIF, FLI, FLC, AVI, MOV, MPEG, WAV, MID, RTF, True Type fonts and more, Internet commands to link your publications to Web sites, Functions for Computer Based Timing and Scoring, Text Entry fields, Radio Buttons and Check Boxes for advanced user interaction, an optional Password to Exit applications, the Option to load your own custom mouse cursors and many more. Requires Win 95/NT 4.0 or later, 8 MB of RAM, 10 MB of hard disk space, a VGA or better graphics card and monitor, and a mouse. A sound card and Internet connection is optional. Regn US\$200.

Melb 8881

WinFlash for Windows 3.x v4.0

Melb 8882

WinFlash for Win 95/NT v4.0

WinFlash is a multimedia creation program designed for coursework or professional training material. The multi-media capabilities allow for an almost unlimited range of study materials. Drawings, pictures, sounds, music, video and text can all be combined to cover nearly any learning requirement. The WYSIWYG editor makes the creation of your card decks quick and easy. It includes built-in browsing and playing/listening capability for .AVI, .BMP, .MID and .WAV files. The printing capabilities will allow you to make your decks with you when you can't study at your computer. WinFlash requires Windows 3.x/95/NT 4.0, 1.5 MB of hard disk space, and an 80386 or faster processor. Regn US\$25.

Melb 8883

Melb 8884

Melb 8885

Melb 8886

Melb 8887

Melb 8888

Star Wars Rebel Theme

Star Trek Theme

Star Trek Klingon Theme

Simpsons Theme

Tool Theme

Doom 2 Theme

These are themes for use with Microsoft Plus! for Win 95. The Star Wars Rebel theme is a theme based upon the Rebel Alliance. The Star Trek themes are based on the original 1960's series and the Klingon Empire. The Simpsons theme is based on the hit television cartoon show The Simpsons. The Doom 2 theme is based on the game Doom 2, and the Tool theme is based on the American band Tool and their album Anemia. Each of these disks has a copy of Desktop Themes (on disk Melb 2608). Alternatively you can use Microsoft Plus! to install these themes onto your computer.

Melb 8889

Yeah Write for Windows 3.x v1.1.3

This Windows-based word processor uses a fill-in-the-blanks approach to create a document from a blank screen. Screen fonts are set independently from printed fonts so you can edit with large characters and print with normal size characters. Yeah Write's program interface is simple enough that using most features is fairly obvious, even if you have minimal Windows experience. It supports normal, bold, italics and underline styles. It also supports standard paragraphs, several types of indented paragraphs, bullets, check boxes, numbered lists, headings and titles. A speller and find/replace are included. Document management is transparent. The program automatically stores documents in folders and drawers. Folders have names which match the type of document held in them. Folders are provided for a diary, journal, general purpose documents, memos, notes, personal letters and business letters. Documents are saved automatically when you exit the program or finish a paragraph. Yeah Write has some limitations. There is only one font per document, although you can have various font sizes for headings and titles. A document can have only one margin setting. You cannot define your own document types. Yeah Write requires Windows 3.x or later. The registered version provides more document types, outlining and other features. Regn US\$15.

Melb 8890

PC Dictionary

PC Dictionary is a program to enhance your word vocabulary. It has a data base of 64,000 of the most frequently looked-up words with concise definitions. You can get access to words with a few keystrokes directly from your word processor. The system is menu driven and has online instructions. It has a list of 800 word parts with extensive word-root definitions. This is one of the most effective systems to master word power. It requires an 80386 or faster processor, Windows 3.x or later and 128 KB of RAM. Regn US\$20.

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in the
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A text editor, its macros and a macro-translator

SHAREWARE REVIEW/TUTORIAL

Keith Phillips

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^OP6 [Enter]

^KP' ^P# [#@

^P# [x1 ^P# [

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using VDE

to contro

your printe

VDE is a small, fast text editor for IBM PCs with:

- easy menu-driven operation or WordStar-compatible command keys
- **multiple file editing with dual windows, cut and paste, compare**
- block copy, move, delete, read, write, and zoom
- find and replace (forward, backward, ignore case, all files, etc)
- protected mode and multi-level undo to avoid unintended changes
- **keystroke macros with full programming ability**
- commands to split files, count words, number lists automatically
- full-featured file browser (tag, edit, import, delete, etc)
- access to any DOS program or a full DOS shell
- variable number of text lines and columns displayable
- automatic save at user-specified interval
- **programmable function keys and many other user configurable options**
- compatibility with older or limited PCs including laptops, palmtops.

VDE is also a powerful word processor with:

- left and right margins, word wrap, automatic or manual reformat
- variable tabs, auto indent, center/flush right, justification
- print preview to check format and page breaks before printing
- **customisable printer drivers for special effects (bold, underline, italic, super/subscript, overstrike, proportional fonts, etc)**
- printing options: headers, pagination, selective print, print to file, single sheet feed, address envelopes
- multiple file formats for text exchange (including DOS, WordStar, WordPerfect, XyWrite, NotaBene, Word)
- integrated spelling checker (registered users only). □

VDE is a shareware text editor and word processor with a simple and useful macro language. Text editors come bundled with Windows and DOS, so what advantages can a shareware text editor offer that would make you want to use it? Well, check the list of features VDE's developer Eric Meyer uses to describes his editor/word processor in the accompanying text box.

The features I've marked in bold are those that I find particularly useful. I used the multiple files, and cut and paste features to copy the boxed text into my submission. The special effects for printers can be the usual bold, underline, etc. but you can customise them to use special effects of your choice.

The keystroke macros and programmable function keys are my main reasons for choosing VDE. To make it easier to create, correct and alter VDE macros I have written a program to translate VDE macros into plain text and vice versa. I will explain how to compose Esc code strings for Epson printers in plain text because this illustrates the principles of the translator and you can use it to make useful VDE macros assigned to function keys. For other printers substitute the equivalent codes.

The advantage of making plain text versions of VDE macros is that you can use a text editor to create the macros then translate and test them in VDE. If any corrections or alterations are necessary the text version can be edited and translated again until the macros are correct. Another way of developing macros is to use VDE's RECORD MACRO feature which creates a macro as you press keys to perform a task. The macro can be saved as a .VDF file which you can then translate into a plain text .VXT file and edit, copy, etc. It is useful to be able to translate both ways between .VXT and .VDF files.

First some fundamentals

VDE macros contain a mixture of text and non-text characters. Non-text keys such as Alt+X, Ctrl+X and the End Key are represented in the VDE documentation as @X, ^X and [End], etc. For example, a plain text macro to set margins and

page length is:

```
^OL9 [Enter] ^OR78 [Enter] ^OP64 [Enter]
```

However, there is a problem. Using @, ^ and [to translate non-text keys creates the need for a convention to translate @, ^ and [, when they are in the macro as text characters. My translator inserts # characters:

#@, #^, #[and ##

represent the single characters

@, ^, [and #

The # character makes the translation easy to read. When you see # the next character is text, not the start of an Alt, Ctrl or Named Key.

The following examples are best understood, by downloading and installing VDE on your computer. Then you can follow along, with VDE running on your computer, as you read the article.

Before you can compose printer setup macros for VDE you need to know how you would type them from the keyboard. The simplest setup is to just press Ctrl+K then press P so the plain text macro is ^KP but either way, the Print Options header appears. To abort and do nothing press the Esc key. To print the current document using the current printer settings, press the Enter key. You could change the macro to ^KP[Enter] to print automatically but I prefer to have the opportunity to check or alter the setup before printing.

You can include any of the codes in the Print Options header in the printer setup string.

For example, code @nn starts printing at page nn. To print from page 2 of a

document press Ctrl+K then press P then press @2 (the plain text macro is KP#@2) with one # character to make the macro type the @ character. Press the Esc key to abort or the Enter key to print.

You can put printer setup codes in the Print Options header by enclosing them in single quotes.

For example, Esc@ resets the printer.

VDE: press Ctrl+K, then press P, then press ', then Ctrl+P (nothing appears on the screen because VDE is waiting for the text key), then [(a left arrow symbol for Ctrl 27 appears on the screen) then press @' so the plain text macro is KP' ^P#[#@'

Remember the # characters are needed to make the macro type the [and @ characters).

With the reset code displayed in the header, press the Esc key to abort or the Enter key to print the current document using the default printer settings.

A setup string usually has several codes, for example:

Code	Action	Key Press	Plain Text Macro
Escx1	Letter Quality	Ctrl+P then [then x1	^P#[x1
EscM	12 characters/ inch	Ctrl+P then [then M	^P#[M
EscC@	Page length 64 lines	Ctrl+P then [then C@	^P#[C#@

The actual macro that I use (see F4 below) also sets VDE's page length and moves the cursor to the last line of the document so that VDE's header displays the last page number and the last line number of the document.

To illustrate how macros are assigned to function keys make a plain text file with the example macros:

F1:<PrnOptn><N>^KP

F2:<PrnPgn2><N>^KP#@2

F3:<Reset ><N>^KP' ^P#[#@'

F4:<LQ12cpi><N>^QC[Up] ^OP6 [Enter] ^KP' ^P#[#@^P#[x1^P#[M^P#[C#@'

Give the text file a name and the extension .VXT and use the translator to make a macro file with the same name and the extension .VDF. In VDE type Alt+U to load the .VDF file. VDE displays the text in the first pairs of angle brackets across the bottom of the screen as prompts for the macros. The <N> means No Repeat. Press the function key to run the macro. You can assign macros to F1 through F12, normal, shift, Ctrl and Alt keys, a total of 48 macros.

The F1, F2 and F3 macros above are trivial but they demonstrate that macros can type strings of text and non-text characters. The F4 macro types a useful macro string. I have PRINT OPTIONS macros to set up the printer for draft quality and letter quality at 10, 12 and 20 cpi assigned to function keys so one keystroke sets up the printer and shows the number of pages to be printed. Other print options can be added from the keyboard before printing, e.g. O or E to print odd or even pages only. The macros perform the tedious task of typing the string of printer setup characters before you print a document.

One warning

In VDE macros ^[is not the same as the named key [Esc]. ^[is ASCII 27. The named key [Esc] in VDE is actually ASCII 127. [Esc] is used in VDE macros for labels and tests. For example [Esc]3 is Label 3. [Esc]=X3 is a test. If the character at the cursor is equal to X jump to label 3. [Esc] can be used to make sophisticated macros but don't use it in printer setup strings. □

The files

The Melbourne PC User Group BBS has the files VDE182A.ZIP and VDEMACR4.LZH in Area GEN Section 31 Editors and Wordprocessors.

VDEMACR4.LZH expands to the following files:

READTHIS.TXT: Detailed description of how to run and update VXT&VDF.EXE.

VXT&VDF.EXE: A VDE macro manager and an attribute manager. Also makes support files and the demonstration file BK.BAT. VXT&VDF.EXE is fully menu driven with prompts whenever input is required. The menus respond to keyboard and mouse input.

VXT&VDF.VXT: This is the source of translation data used by VXT&VDF.EXE.

TEXTMODE.VXT: A .VXT file showing how Esc Keys, Labels and Run Modes are displayed by VXT&VDF.EXE.

TEXTMACS.VXT: A .VXT file showing how macro text Keys, Ctrl keys, Alt keys and named Keys are displayed by VXT&VDF.EXE.

TEXTLONG.VXT: A .VXT file showing how macro key definitions which exceed the maximum permitted length are displayed by VXT&VDF.EXE.

BK.VDF: Macro definitions used with the demonstration file BK.BAT. The demonstration uses VDE.EXE, BK.VDF and BK.BAT to provide a full-screen file backup system. This system backs up files with +A attributes (hence the inclusion of an attribute manager) and demonstrates the power of using VDE's macros to perform complicated tasks. □



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Compression programs

**PKZip
RAR
Ultra**

PKZIP, RAR & ULTRA COMPARED

Frank Schuffelen

Recently I was discussing compression programs with one of my best friends, when I mentioned that I had registered RAR and was very pleased with it. He asked if I had ever tried Ultra Compressor 2 (UC2), available on the Internet. Having previously done a comparison between ARJ, PKZip and RAR, I didn't much fancy doing yet another, but I couldn't resist the temptation.

I did several runs, using a different option each time, to test which commands and options would give me either the best time or the best compression, or a combination of both. Before each run, the existing archives would be deleted, so that I would be starting with a clean slate each time. Also, to prevent the effect of caching when comparing different archivers on the same set of files, I deliberately ran each archiver on various files, all of which totalled nearly 80 MB! Had I run each archiver on just one folder, the results could have been influenced by some form of caching, which would then have been unfair on the first archiver.

The computer used was a clone 486DX4/100, with a 1.5 GB hard disk drive split into seven logical drives. All tests were run in a DOS window under Windows 95. No other programs were active at the time of testing.

How I went about it

I selected five directories with only my own data, no programs.

- **123:** (Lotus spreadsheets) with 79 files taking up 6.7 MB
- **ACCESS:** (Microsoft database) with 56 files taking up 8.7 MB
- **DOC:** (Word and ASCII documents) with 525 files taking up 22.5 MB
- **SMARTCAT:** disk catalog files with 15 files taking up 10.0 MB
- **WINCAT:** disk catalog files with 22 files taking up 3.5 MB
- **WINFAX:** faxes with 535 files taking up 22.8 MB

This totalled 1,232 files taking up 74.2 MB.

The batch file I created looks like this in part:

```
@ECHO OFF
ECHO TESTING BEGUN > D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
ECHO | MORE | TIME >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
ECHO ULTRA STARTED DATA 123 >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
ECHO | MORE | TIME >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
F:\ULTRA\UC ASF D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*.*
```

The same command for UC2 was repeated for another five large directories, some with nested subdirectories.

Table 1.			Per cent	PKZip	RAR	UC2
123	ZIP	1,728,554	25.9%	01.48		
	RAR	1,457,066	21.9%		01.44	
	UC2	1,614,070	24.2%			01.50
ACCESS	ZIP	2,273,716	26.2%	01.12		
	RAR	2,136,634	24.6%		01.35	
	UC2	2,111,854	24.4%			01.59
DOC	ZIP	8,617,571	31.3%	05.06		
	RAR	8,338,442	30.3%		06.28	
	UC2	8,223,874	29.9%			08.33
SMARTCAT	ZIP	3,520,741	35.1%	02.01		
	RAR	3,363,771	33.6%		02.47	
	UC2	3,487,904	34.8%			03.12
WINCAT	ZIP	636,718	18.3%	00.28		
	RAR	604,181	17.3%		00.39	
	UC2	631,198	18.1%			00.45
WINFAX	ZIP	15,388,498	67.4%	04.58		
	RAR	15,272,894	66.9%		05.29	
	UC2	15,140,888	66.4%			09.20
Totals						
PKZip		32,165,798	40.6%	15.33		
RAR		31,172,988	39.4%		18.42	
UC2		31,209,788	39.4%			25.39

Table 2.			Per cent	PKZip	RAR	UC2
123	ZIP	1,713,317	25.7%	03.56		
	RAR	1,455,246	21.8%		06.54	
	UC2	1,605,678	24.1%			03.50
ACCESS	ZIP	2,247,036	25.9%	02.07		
	RAR	2,114,517	24.4%		04.42	
	UC2	2,088,660	24.1%			02.50
DOC	ZIP	8,528,248	31.0%	08.17		
	RAR	8,251,395	30.0%		17.16	
	UC2	8,127,178	29.5%			13.00
SMARTCAT	ZIP	3,504,478	35.0%	03.46		
	RAR	3,359,452	33.5%		11.54	
	UC2	3,464,890	34.6%			05.00
WINCAT	ZIP	624,398	17.9%	00.50		
	RAR	596,092	17.1%		01.42	
	UC2	620,236	17.8%			01.00
WINFAX	ZIP	15,358,330	67.3%	06.03		
	RAR	15,248,308	66.8%		06.45	
	UC2	15,097,320	66.2%			11.00
Totals						
PKZip		31,975,807	40.4%	24.59		
RAR		31,025,010	39.2%		49.13	
UC2		31,003,962	39.1%			36.00

```
ECHO PKZIP STARTED DATA 123 >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
ECHO | MORE | TIME >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
F:\PK\PKZIP -A -P -R -WHS D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*.*
```

Again, the same command for PKZip was repeated for another five large directories, some with nested subdirectories.

```
ECHO RAR STARTED DATA 123 >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
ECHO | MORE | TIME >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
E:\RAR\RAR A-R D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*.*
```

Again, the same command for RAR was repeated for another five large directories, some with nested subdirectories. Lastly, we needed to record a finish time.

```
ECHO TESTING ENDED >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
ECHO | MORE | TIME >> D:\BATCH\COMPARES.LOG
```

As you can see, I used a log file called COMPARES.LOG, which showed me which archive was started at which time, to give me an accurate time comparison. Although there are programs available to start and stop timers, everybody should have access to the MORE command, which is one of the files supplied with

os/Windows. It is used to bypass my having to press a key when I request the time. The output in the log file looks like:

```
Testing begun
Current time is 8:22:03.72a
Enter new time:

Ultra started data 123
Current time is 8:22:04.10a
Enter new time:
```

```
Ultra started data access
Current time is 8:24:05.93a
Enter new time:
```

to calculate the time taken, I simply deducted the first time from the second time.

Test results

The first test was performed using default compressions, i.e. no changes were made to compress either tighter or faster. The file sizes and times for the default compressions are in Table 1. So, using default compression, RAR produces the smallest archive, PKzip the largest. But, PKzip is the fastest, whilst UC2 is the slowest.

Saving space

Next, the test was run a second time, this time to find out which achieves greatest compression, regardless of time. After experimentation with the different options, the batch file was changed as follows:

```
\PK\PKZIP -A -P -R -WHS -EX D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
\RAR\RAR A -R -M5 D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
\ULTRA\UC ASFTT D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
```

Refer to Table 2. UC2 produced the smallest archive this time, whilst PKzip produced the largest. However, PKzip was easily the fastest, whilst RAR was the slowest.

For the third run, RAR and UC2 were run again with different options as follows:

```
\RAR\RAR A -R -S D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
\ULTRA\UC ASFTST D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
```

Refer to Table 3. Here RAR not only produced the smallest archive, but it was also nearly four times faster than UC2.

For the fourth run, RAR's option was changed as follows:

```
\RAR\RAR A -R -S -M5 D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
```

Table 3.			Per cent	PKZip	RAR	UC2
123	RAR	1,383,130	20.7%		01.44	
	UC2	1,617,360	24.3%			15.08
ACCESS	RAR	2,121,785	24.5%		01.32	
	UC2	2,071,506	23.9%			06.45
DOC	RAR	7,944,596	28.9%		06.59	
	UC2	8,043,678	29.2%			26.32
SMARTCAT	RAR	3,362,537	33.6%		02.45	
	UC2	3,456,498	34.5%			14.58
WINCAT	RAR	598,480	17.2%		00.39	
	UC2	609,758	17.5%			02.14
WINFAX	RAR	14,958,707	65.6%		06.25	
	UC2	15,085,640	66.1%			13.39
Totals						
	RAR	30,369,235	38.3%		20.04	
	UC2	30,844,440	38.9%			79.16

Refer to Table 4.

RAR now produced a slightly smaller archive than the previous run, its greatest compression, but it took nearly three times longer, although still faster and smaller than UC2. This option would obviously only be used if you were really short on space and didn't mind the extra time.

Aiming for speed

For the fifth run, the options were changed to try to produce the fastest run with the least compression, with the following parameters being used:

```
F:\PK\PKZIP -A -P -R -WHS -EF D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
E:\RAR\RAR A -R -M1 D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
F:\ULTRA\UC ASFTF D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
```

Refer to Table 5. Here RAR was the fastest whilst UC2 took more than twice as long. UC2 was the smallest, whilst PKzip was the largest.

For the sixth and final run, PKzip's and RAR's options were changed as follows:

```
F:\PK\PKZIP -A -P -R -WHS -ES D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
E:\RAR\RAR A -R -S -M1 D:\TEST\123 D:\123\*. *
```

Refer to Table 6. Now PKzip was easily the fastest, being more than twice as fast as RAR, even though RAR produced a considerably smaller archive.

Which do you choose?

The end result is that although the fastest was PKzip at 5 hrs 49 min, and RAR the smallest at 30.2 megabytes, there was not always a lot of difference between them. If you are already using any of these compressors, you may as well stick with the one you have.

There are some other features that either RAR or UC2 have, that may influence you to register either of these shareware programs. Both do have an option to include extra data to make the archives safer, even if there are read errors on the data. Both also have a much easier command structure and an interactive mode, making them easier to use than PKzip.

UC2 enables you to have as many versions of any file as you wish, making it ideal for programmers or others where similar data is changed regularly. It is also, to the best of my knowledge, the only one of the three that handles Windows 95's long file names, a requirement I have.

About the author

Frank Schuffelen is a former member of Melb PC who moved to Queensland and decided he still needed his regular fix of *PC Update* so joined again. He is also a member of the Brisbane User Group.

He has owned several computers (or he says, being a bit more honest, nearly several dozen, but not quite). His first was an Exidy Sorcerer, from Dick Smith. Frank started a user group, that was first called the Sorcerer Users Group, then Sorcerer Computer Users of Australia, then Personal Computers Support Group, now currently Visual Basic Users of Australia. He is an honorary member and the proud holder of membership number "1".

Other than computing, computing and computing, he also likes listening to pop music of the sixties. He collects computer books and magazines. His favourite program is Quicken, except it has a bad habit of telling him how much he spends on computer hardware and software! □

Table 4.			Per cent	PKZip	RAR	UC2
123		1,377,778	20.7%		08.29	
ACCESS		2,100,406	24.2%		05.32	
DOC	RAR	7,845,988	28.5%		21.47	
SMARTCAT		3,358,202	33.5%		12.55	
WINCAT		590,297	16.9%		01.55	
WINFAX		14,930,742	65.4%		09.04	
Totals						
	RAR	30,203,413	38.1%		59.42	

Tables 5 and 6 are on the following page.

Table 5.			Per cent	PKZip	RAR	UC2
123	ZIP	1,771,147	26.6%	00.55		
	RAR	1,555,172	23.3%		00.46	
	UC2	1,646,080	24.7%			01.30
ACCESS	ZIP	2,405,024	27.7%	00.44		
	RAR	2,269,386	26.2%		00.53	
	UC2	2,167,370	25.0%			01.43
DOC	ZIP	8,960,286	32.5%	02.56		
	RAR	8,819,729	32.0%		03.19	
	UC2	8,515,458	30.9%			06.39
SMARTCAT	ZIP	3,611,606	36.0%	01.11		
	RAR	3,513,667	35.1%		01.10	
	UC2	3,555,748	35.5%			02.30
WINCAT	ZIP	662,509	19.0%	01.16		
	RAR	651,377	18.9%		00.21	
	UC2	651,848	18.7%			00.37
WINFAX	ZIP	15,948,926	69.9%	03.32		
	RAR	15,712,548	68.9%		02.57	
	UC2	15,542,232	68.1%			08.02
Totals						
PKZip		33,359,498	42.1%	10.34		
RAR		32,521,879	41.1%		09.26	
UC2		32,078,736	40.5%			21.01

Table 6.			Per cent	PKZip	RAR	UC2
123	ZIP	1,916,958	28.8%	00.22		
	RAR	1,497,902	22.5%		00.51	
ACCESS	ZIP	2,608,270	30.1%	00.27		
	RAR	2,254,656	26.0%		00.57	
DOC	ZIP	9,915,752	36.0%	01.47		
	RAR	8,466,620	30.7%		03.42	
SMARTCAT	ZIP	3,928,976	39.2%	00.35		
	RAR	3,512,951	35.1%		01.19	
WINCAT	ZIP	748,562	21.5%	00.10		
	RAR	646,111	18.5%		00.23	
WINFAX	ZIP	16,460,870	72.1%	02.28		
	RAR	15,416,900	67.6%		05.10	
Totals						
PKZip		35,579,388	44.9%	05.49		
RAR		31,795,140	40.1%		12.22	

Upgrading my PC

AN EXPERIENCE

Alan Marks

In April, at the monthly meeting, I asked: "I have an IBM PS/1 that has had a hard disk and memory upgrade with non-IBM parts. There have been many problems that I cannot resolve. Is there anyone else who has gone through this type of upgrade?"

The question received a certain amount of derisive laughter from the crowd—my interpretation was "How could any serious computer user buy an IBM?" Happily, the problem is solved, and I will provide a little bit of detail as this may help others.

The original machine (a 486DX/33 with 4 MB RAM and 170 MB hard drive) was first upgraded by adding 4 MB RAM, then later by changing the hard drive to 1.2 GB and adding 8 MB RAM. None of these additions used "genuine" IBM parts.

The second upgrade was followed by instability, often in Word 6, but most noticeably in Web browsers, both Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer. I could rarely stay on the Net for more than 5 minutes without a GPF occurring. Despite the use of Dr Watson and the claims of First Aid 95 Deluxe, there was no intelligible clue as to the cause.

The final trigger was my inability to upgrade from Windows 3.11 to Windows 95, despite several attempts. A discerning young relative eventually suggested incompatibility between hardware components, e.g. some RAM with silvered pins and some with gold. My two oldest RAM cards had silver pins and the newer 8 MB had gold.

Next, I called IBM's Help line, expecting a demand for a fee before any help was forthcoming. After all, the machine was 1993 vintage! Not so! There was never any talk of money, nor any questioning about the origin of the added parts. Simply the suggestion that perhaps all of my RAM was not parity RAM, since the machine required Parity RAM.

I went back to the supplier who had installed the new hard drive and extra RAM. He quickly discovered that the 8 MB RAM he had supplied was pseudo-parity (apparently it had an on-board parity generator) and suspected that this might be the cause of the trouble. It was removed and replaced with genuine parity RAM, and all the instability disappeared. Problem solved! □

Visit the East SIG

(2nd Tuesday of the month)

see page 34 for contact details

- Q&A, with George Skarbek
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- Tips and Tricks, with Keith Beresford...and more

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Child Well Being: A guide for parents and children

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bernadette Houghton



Child Well Being, another addition to the Corel Medical Series, covers the general topic of health and safety of children. Claimed to be the "ideal reference tool for schools, child care facilities and families with young children," Child Well Being has separate Parents' and Children's modules.

The Parents' module includes Health, Safety, Guidance, Nutrition, Your Health and Tools. Topics include meal planning, injury prevention, toilet learning, play, television, and similar issues. The Tools section contains a collection of charts, including a safer home checklist, child development milestones, lists of healthy and unhealthy foods, and what to do when your child becomes sick. Throughout, there are random quizzes and "Did You Know" pop-up screens with extra tidbits of information. Users can add bookmarks and annotations which are invisible to other users.

Child Well Being presents topics quickly and superficially, using fairly simple language. Unfortunately, this strategy doesn't work too well. The tone comes across as patronising and the information is simplistic, with significant omissions. Bad placement of hypertext links

may also cause readers to incorrectly believe that they have full information on a topic. As a result of these problems, the quality and potential value of much of the information is a little dubious. Typical examples include

- The topic Feeding Babies and Toddlers implies that meat is an appropriate first solid food (the link to subsequent information recommending that meats be started at 7-9 months is located on a later page).
- Breastfeeding is discussed briefly, under the heading of Bottlefeeding.
- Readiness for toilet learning is discussed, but not strategies.

The Children's module aims at ages four and upwards. It covers topics such as

- Germs
- Feelings
- Illness
- Safety

Information is presented in a cartoon style format, with hotspots that animate when clicked. There is a colouring book with a fill tool, and children can choose to listen to the narrative, or listen and read at once. The animations and cartoons are only mildly entertaining; my 4-year-old wasn't motivated enough to sit through more than a couple of pages. The material is reasonably informative, but contains conflicting statements that could puzzle young children. For example, on one page, the child is told to listen to his body when he is sick as it will tell him what to do to get better (e.g. rest when he is tired); on the next page he is, in effect, told **not** to listen to

good information, but

the simplistic content

and patronising tone

are intensely irritating

his body, by drinking plenty of fluids even though he doesn't feel thirsty. As a parent, I was also made uneasy by negative statements such as "Unfortunately, though, you won't always stay healthy."

Child Well Being certainly has some good information, but so much of the Parents' module is basic and just plain common sense. I found the simplistic content and patronising tone, and the random quizzes and informational pop-ups intensely irritating; the Children's module has a similar condescending feel. On the whole, the CD fails dismally to live up to Corel's hope of "an ideal reference tool". □

Info Box

**Child Well Being:
A guide for parents and children**

Minimum system requirements

486DX2-66
8 MB RAM
Windows 3.1
256-colour display
Sound card
Mouse
Double-speed CD-ROM drive
4 MB free hard disk space.
The CD must be in the drive for the program to run.

Availability and cost

Available from most Corel retailers.
Contact Corel Customer Service Centre
on 1800 658 850.

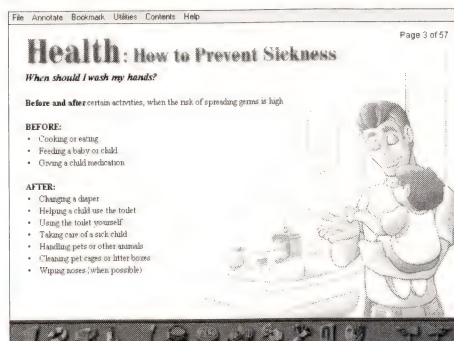


Figure 1. Typical screen from the Parent's module

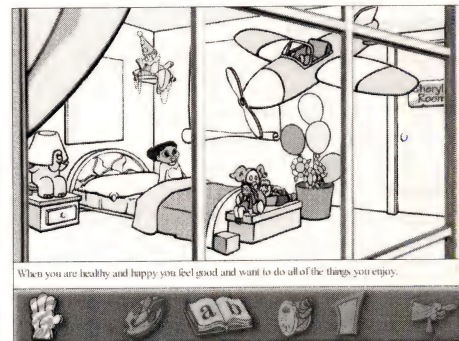


Figure 2. The Children's module

Are you looking SCSI lately?

Part 5: AIDE Systems

HINTS AND KINKS

Fred Townsend



Enhanced IDE...the best thing since sliced bread, or burnt toast?

The competition between SCSI and IDE disk systems has become more intense with the introduction of Enhanced IDE (EIDE) peripherals. EIDE, under many names including the so called Advanced IDE (AIDE) offers features that look very similar to SCSI. Let's contrast SCSI and IDE systems in the past, present, and future.

SCSI has always offered the richest feature set for any peripheral. The trouble was, it was difficult to install on systems not specifically designed for it. Mac and UNIX users got along fine, but IBM users found the short-sighted BIOS design a difficult obstacle when installing SCSI.

In 1986, several drive manufacturers knocked the frills off their SCSI offerings and replaced them with a simpler interface. The engines were the same, only the circuit board changed.

Since the drives shared common SCSI roots, there was a certain degree of standardisation but there never was a real, formal standard for the economy drives. There wasn't even a standard name for these stripped-down drives.

Western Digital was first on the scene, and registered their Intelligent Disk Interface (IDE) name. Other companies refused to use the registered name. Since the interface was specifically designed for the IBM using the ISA bus, the industry unofficially adopted the term ATA interface drives.

Very few people recognised the term ATA so the dealers generally used "IDE" even if the manufacturers—outside of Western Digital—refused to label the drives IDE.

History repeats

Enhanced IDE manufacturers haven't settled on a single name either. Worse, there is still no standard so no guarantee of compatibility. Such terms as AIDE, Fast ATA, Fast ATA-2, ATA3, ATAPI, Mode 0, Mode 2, Mode 3, Mode 27 and Bus Mastering IDE have been used. Confused? It only gets worse. The only thing you can bet on is IDE continuing to offer lower cost SCSI features that don't work like SCSI features.

The good news is EIDE improvements offer remedies to many IDE problems. For instance, it cracks the 540 MB limit so gigabyte drives can use the economy

interface. Some interfaces connect as many as four drives so the two drive limit is also broached. Finally, CD-ROMs and perhaps even tape drives can share the new interface.

At what cost?

First, EIDE drives fight with the existing AT BIOS just like SCSI. An overlaid BIOS, like SCSI uses, would be the most efficient, but most expensive and difficult, remedy. The cheaper and less efficient, but field upgradable remedy, is to use drivers. This means sending software with the peripheral and hoping the non-standardised drive interface will understand the software. A safer remedy is to use new hardware but unless the BIOS is re-written, drivers will still be needed. Any of these remedies should keep a plain Jane user happy for a while.

What about the power user?

Windows is a great multi-tasking operating system (OS) as long as only one window is attempting to do any real work. Windows programs put a tremendous burden on all memory resources, particularly the hard drive. This translates to poor performance. Users that need real multi-tasking rely upon OS/2, Desqview, or UNIX. To the peripherals, multi-tasking translates to multi-threading. Disk drives, CD-ROMs, and caches of all kinds must be designed for multi-threading or suffer a tremendous performance hit.

Windows has tried to improve performance by adding caching programs like SMARTDRV but performance is still abysmal for most power users so they optimise their systems by tuning. Tuning is the process of setting WIN.INI, SYSTEM.INI and such programs as SMARTDRV to the optimal parameters to match the motherboard, RAM, and disk capacities and peripherals.

Tuning of this kind may offer substantial performance improvement but is still painful static tuning. Once the programs are running it's too late to change parameters so it is necessary to optimise toward the centerline applications. It would be better, particularly when multi-tasking, if the system could be optimised dynamically. That way each program could be tuned to meet the current environment.

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this serie

Some operating systems, such as OS/2, can dynamically optimise, but can't do much with IDE peripherals. Why? The IDE peripherals have all their smarts onboard but can't share their intelligence with the CPU or other peripherals because they use dumb interfaces. So far, EIDE has done nothing to change this fact.

For instance, with IDE if a seek operation is started on a slow device like a CD-ROM the entire system including the CPU idles until the seek operation is completed. Conversely when the same operation is performed on the SCSI bus, the host adapter can still exchange information with the hard drive and more important the CPU can still multi-task. This enables dynamic tuning. Furthermore, the smart interface SCSI host adapter and if necessary the CPU, can act as smart arbiters because they know the characteristics of the peripherals. More important, the CPU can participate in the tuning process. In fact the CPU can participate in the installation process so Plug and Play installations are now possible.

Best bets

In 1986 when IDE was born you were probably nursing your 286 while eyeing a 386. You had the choice of a 386 SX 16 or 25 MHz or a 386 DX 25 or 33 MHz processor. Today there are over twenty target processors. Tomorrow, even more.

If you were one of the many that succumbed to upgradable processors, your next chip might be an Overdrive. However, a prudent buyer will notice that a whole new motherboard and processor can be purchased for less money than an overdrive. A golden opportunity.

The best performance is obtained with local bus host adapters. As you might

less the most difficult installations are so with local bus adapters. PCI local bus adapters are also among the most expensive and after all it was the economy, not performance, that peaked interest in E. So why talk about local buses? Motherboards have shrunk in size and price, because all the glue chip functions have been collapsed into a few VLSI chips. National Semiconductor has been making a single chip with one parallel and two 450, 550, or 650 serial ports, a game port, a floppy controller and an IDE interface for many years. This makes it easy to incorporate these features into a motherboard made barren by VLSI chips. The best part is these chips can reside on the local bus and since the BIOS is fitted to the motherboard a seamless overlaid BIOS can be used for either EIDE or SCSI host adapters. Now the installation problems are minimised without a cost penalty. A win-win.

The careful shopper will find a lot of options and a lot of bang for the buck. Besides EIDE on the motherboard you'll find SCSI as well.

Summary

DE may solve some problems for the present user but will cause grief with tomorrow's new operating systems. EIDE designers have not noted the lessons painfully wrought by SCSI designers. Offering many SCSI features will also require many of the SCSI remedies. The start user will not experience the re-inventing of the wheel. Rather, they will look for a graceful migration path to SCSI.

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About the author

Fred Townsend is a consulting electronic engineer and owner of DC to Light Consulting Services. His business specialises in noise managed, system, circuit and chip designs in both analog and digital domains. Fred has a rich background in broadcasting; telephone, disk drive, microwave and computer manufacturing; military; and aerospace. Fred has been a sysop since 1982 when he started his first BBS using a CP/M 5100 system with 0.8 MB of storage on two floppy drives. Today his system is a LAN-based, 4-line, system with over 8 GB of storage. Fred has served as an officer for several user groups and is currently president of the Silicon Valley Computer Society.

Fred is a former member of the faculties of Allen Hancock and Mission Colleges and holds a Bachelor Science degree in Electronic Engineering and an Associate Science degree in Electronic Search and Development Technology. □

The Family Home Remedies Guide

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bob Burt



This CD-ROM is a recent addition to the Parsons Technology series of software on home-related subjects. I must admit to facing the prospect of reviewing this guide with some trepidation. Home remedies? Miracle cures, perhaps or New Age therapies flying in the face of your doctor's advice? I need not have been concerned and neither should you. The contents of this disk are derived from a health advisory manual called *The Home Remedies Handbook* which offers sound preventive medicine advice prepared entirely by qualified medical people. As the foreword to the book itself explains, the therapies are "safe, practical actions that you can take to help yourself in your own health care".

Certainly, you need to use sensibly the material contained on the disc. Don't go overboard trying every therapy for every condition you imagine you might have!

The program

The program itself is easy to install and run. You need about 5 MB of hard disk space for the recommended installation method, where you need the CD-ROM to be running while you use the program. Certainly if you are using a Pentium-based computer even with just a double-

speed CD-ROM drive, searching and general access to the 100 or so topics will be fast enough to be quite comfortable.

The topics, ranging from acne to yeast infections are listed in a window panel on the left of the screen. A summary of the highlighted subject appears in a window on the right. A third window, just below the second, contains, with obvious allegory, a large picture of a ripe apple. You click on this to obtain more detailed information on the selected topic.

You are offered the usually expected conveniences of searching for specific words or phrases, making bookmarks, adding notes or printing a hard copy of the material.

The contents

The topics cover many conditions. Under the fourth letter of the alphabet, for example, we have the alliterative dandruff, denture discomfort, dermatitis, diabetes, diaper (nappy) rash, diarrhea (that's how the Americans spell it), dry hair and dry skin. Each entry offers a range of suggested treatments and each is both simple and safe. Although these are provided by medical practitioners, you are frequently reminded to see your own doctor in particular circumstances. Thus you are offered a range of treatments for a black eye (the care tips including ice the area, pack it in popcorn or peas, clean it up, avoid pressing on the eye, keep your chin up and wear goggles) but you are advised to see your doctor to rule out damage to the eye itself. Of particular interest to computer enthusiasts, is the section on *Carpal Tunnel Syndrome*, which offers 17 specific tips for protecting your wrists whilst you are seated in front of the keyboard.

It is probably no accident that infectious diseases are not covered, with the notable exceptions of the common cold, influenza and genital herpes.

Conclusion

This program is replete with practical medically-based information. It is particularly helpful for coping with chronic conditions such as arthritis and recurrent back pain. □

Info Box

The Family Home Remedies Guide

Availability and cost

Local price is not available at time of printing
RRP: US\$19

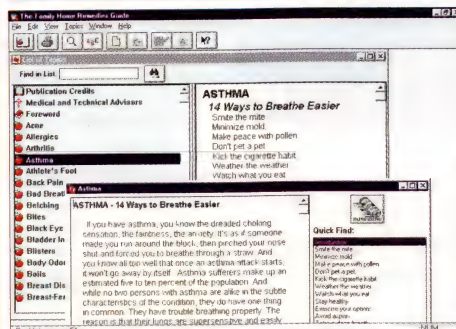


Figure 1. Accessing home remedies for asthma

Training courses

AUGUST – SEPTEMBER

Barry Fredrickson



Contacting us

You may contact Training with suggestions for training courses or other training-related matters by sending e-mail to training@melbpc.org.au

Applications

Introduction to Access v2.0 \$102

Ray Azzopardi

6.30 pm–9.00 pm, Thu 11, 18 Sep.

This course gets you started on the road to making use of the powerful features in Access. You'll learn how to create tables and queries. Students receive a comprehensive exercise manual.

Prerequisites: Experience with Windows and a mouse.

Starting QuickBooks \$180

Viv Martin

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Mon 8, 15, 22, 29 Sep.

This course is for people who have started to use QuickBooks and want to gain further benefits from the package.

Prerequisites: Must understand the concepts of double-entry bookkeeping, and be familiar with Windows.

MS Publisher Introduction \$90

John Hulskamp

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 13, 20 Aug.

This course provides participants with an introduction to desktop publishing using MS Publisher, and an opportunity to produce a simple flyer and brochure targeted at the participants' interests.

Prerequisites: A familiarity with a word-processing package such as MS Word, and Windows operation.

Introduction to Powerpoint \$45

Caroline Houston

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 24 Sep.

This course will give you an introduction to Microsoft Powerpoint.

Prerequisites: Students must be familiar with Windows.

MS Word v6/7 enhancing documents \$60

Jill Renison

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Thu 28 Aug.

On the completion of this course students will be able to create and modify the appearance of a table, enter data into a table, create columns and frames, import graphics, create captions and embed drawings, and use Word Art effectively.

Prerequisites: Familiarity with the Windows environment including mouse and keyboard skills. Students should be able to cut, copy and paste text and should have a basic knowledge of Word for Windows.

MS Word v6/7 merging \$60

Jill Renison

1.00 pm–4.00 pm, Sat 20 Sep.

On the completion of this course students will be able to create and work with a data source, perform a merge, merge to envelopes and labels, and merge from an external data source.

Prerequisites: Must be able to create, save and edit Word documents, and have experience using a mouse with Windows.

Office 97 Overview \$45

Len Krois

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Mon 1 Sep.

Overview of the major new and revised features, including the Internet Web features. This course will help people who are trying to decide on an office suite, or people who are considering when to upgrade.

Prerequisites: Acquaintance with Office 95/3.1 or other integrated Windows Office suites would enhance the experience, but no specifics are needed.

Communications

Introduction to the Melb PC BBS \$45

Lynn Pollock

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 8 Aug.

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 12 Sep.

A basic examination of the Melb PC BBS covering initial logon, menu system, message areas, file areas and transfers, plus tips and tricks.

Prerequisites: None.

Note: This course has a companion course: File Management, Archiving and Compression Techniques.

Communications Workshop \$60

Doug Brooke

9.00 am–1.00 pm, Sun 7 Sep.

Accessing and using the BBS, configuring a communications program, problems and diagnoses, networks, netmail, file transfers.

Prerequisites: None.

Internet

Note: If you are starting from minimal knowledge, we suggest that the Internet courses are best attended in the sequence shown. More advanced students should attend at their skill level.

A special Windows 3.1 Internet course is available by request, subject to minimum student numbers. Register with the office.

1. Introduction to the Internet \$45

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 23 Aug.

9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 27 Sep.

An overview of the Melb PC Internet service. Live explanations of all the major programs that make up the Internet. Full detailed discussion of the hardware and software items involved. General questions concerning Internet connections.

Prerequisites: None.

2. Using the Internet with Windows 95 \$90

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sat 9 Aug.

9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 14 Sep.

This is the basic course for Windows 95 users. It suits people about to install Win 95 Internet software or novice users of the Internet who want a full explanation of the basic setup and techniques involved. Hands-on individual installation of 32-bit Internet software.

Explanation, discussion and live student Internet connections to demonstrate and practice all the major components.

Prerequisites: Must be experienced with Windows 95.

Booking

To book a course, please use the order form on page 31 or, for credit card orders, phone or fax the office (numbers on page 3.)

3. Advanced Internet Part 1: Effectively using Web Browsers \$60

Lynn Pollock

1.00 pm–5.00 pm, Sat 23 Aug.

1.00 pm–5.00 pm, Sat 27 Sep.

Complete examination and discussion of all the features in the latest versions of both Netscape and MS Internet Explorer. Configuring, bookmark and favourite management, saving images and data, offline viewing of saved information, effective use of search engines and techniques, and tips and tricks. Students have live Internet connections to practice their searching technique.

Prerequisites: Students should have attended the basic Internet course or have a good understanding of Internet principles. This is an advanced course.

4. Advanced Internet Part 2: Internet Workshop (formerly More Internet) \$90

Lynn Pollock

9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 24 Aug.

9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 28 Sep.

Complete discussion and live student Internet connections examining all the features that make up the Internet today, with the exception of Web browsers. Students will gain experience with the following: advanced e-mail, FTP, Archie, Gopher, Finger, Telnet, IRC Network, Internet Phone, newsgroups and list servers, also connection problems and tips and tricks.

Prerequisites: Students should have attended the basic Internet course or have a good understanding of Internet principles. This is an advanced course.

Beginners' HTML/Web page authoring \$45

Steven Goldate

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Thu 14, 21 Aug.

6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 10, 17 Sep.

The course covers the principles of HTML (HyperText Markup Language) for writing Web pages for the Internet. Participants learn to write HTML using a text-based and a WYSIWYG editor. Covers design aspects, things to do and not do, image file formats, uploading files to a server, getting noticed, and more.

Prerequisites: Basic Windows experience assumed. Experience using a text editor preferred.

Advanced HTML/Web page authoring \$90

even Goldate
 7.00 pm–9.30 pm, Tue 23, 30 Sep.
 This course continues on from the
 beginner's HTML course with participants
 developing enhanced Web pages.
Prerequisites: Beginners HTML/Web page
 authoring course.

NEW!

Operating Systems, Diagnostics, Hardware

Introduction to networks \$90

Krois
 7.00 am–4.00 pm, Sat 16 Aug.
 This course shows you how to connect two or more
 computers so that you can share computer
 resources.
Prerequisites: You must be familiar with
 Windows 3.x or Win 95.

Introduction to UNIX \$45

Krois
 7.00 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 19 Sep.
 This course gives UNIX basics for people who want a basic feel
 for the open systems environment. UNIX is a
 popular shareware version of UNIX that runs on IBM
 compatible PCs. The session includes: logging
 into a UNIX system, finding your way around,
 manipulating files, viewing and editing text files,
 using the online text manual.
Prerequisites: Command line computing
 experience preferred.

Notes

Courses are held at the group's premises, usually
 in the training room. Some courses are held in the
 SIG room, so check when you arrive.

For more details see the BBS or the group's
 Web pages.

Enrolments usually close a week before the
 course starting date.

The address is:

2nd Floor, 66 Albert Road
 South Melbourne VIC 3205.

There is normally plenty of nearby parking in
 the evenings or at weekends.

The Basics of Programming \$135

Gerard Schlosmacher
 9.30 am–5.30 pm, Sun 31 Aug.
 Provides students with an insight to what
 programming is all about, the concepts of
 programming and computer languages. Students
 will also review a Visual Basic program in detail
 and test it. This is a prerequisite for Visual Basic
 for Starters.
Prerequisites: Familiarity with Windows,
 preferably Windows 95, including mouse and
 keyboard skills. A basic general knowledge of
 computers.

Visual Basic for Starters \$135

Gerard Schlosmacher
 6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Mon 4, 11, 18 Aug.
 Students will learn the evolution of Visual
 Basic, the VB development environment, data
 types, using files, what events are, essential VB
 language statements, and what to do about errors.
Prerequisites: The Basics of Programming
 course, or an understanding of programming
 concepts, including data types and use of files.
 Prior use of one or more programming languages.

NEW!

Visual Basic Intermediate \$135

Gerard Schlosmacher
 6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Tue 2, 9, 16 Sep.
 This course explores the depths of the
 Visual Basic language, providing students with
 considerable understanding of its capabilities.
Prerequisites: Visual Basic for Starters course or
 similar introductory course to Visual Basic. Further
 experience with Visual Basic would advantageous.

NEW!

Computer basics \$120

Mary Levens
 6.30 pm–8.30 pm, Tue 5, 12, 19, 26 Aug.
 Take control of your computer with this hands-on
 guided discovery of dos-based computing. Covers
 terminology, basic dos commands, directory
 structure, file types, brief discussion of hardware
 and software. Knowledge of these topics is a
 prerequisite for other courses.
Prerequisites: No prior computing experience
 required. Students must have frequent access to a
 dos-based PC outside of class.

Upgrade to Windows 95 \$139.50

Gerard Schlosmacher
 9.00 am–5.30 pm, Sat 6 Sep.
 An understanding of the new features of
 Windows 95, and how they differ from Windows
 3.1. Using "Shortcuts". Customising Windows 95.
Prerequisites: Familiarity with Windows 3.x,
 including operation of Program Manager, Control
 Panel and File Manager.

Overview of Windows 95 \$45

Barry Fredrickson
 9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 30 Aug.
 9.00 am–12 noon, Sat 20 Sep.
 Students will learn about the Windows 95
 Desktop, Help, Explorer, Find, Shortcuts, and
 some of the Windows 95 utilities like Wordpad
 and Notepad.
Prerequisites: Familiarity with Windows 95
 including mouse and keyboard skills.

Starting Windows 95 \$139.50

Mary Levens
 9.00 am–5.30 pm, Sun 17 Aug.
 Students can expect to learn: Basic Windows
 jargon and terminology, how to accomplish
 common tasks with applications, how to change
 the way Windows looks and works.
Prerequisites: No prior computing experience
 required.

Advanced Windows 95 \$90

Lynn Pollock
 9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 10 Aug.
 9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sat 13 Sep.
 A full and detailed examination of Windows 95
 for experienced users. Topics include adding
 hardware, registry control and editing, backup
 techniques, communications, networking with
 Windows 95, conflict resolution, enhancing
 performance, system maintenance, and many tips
 and tricks.
Prerequisites: Must be familiar with Windows
 95.

File management, archiving and compression techniques \$45

Lynn Pollock
 6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 22 Aug.
 6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 26 Sep.
 Explanation of file management including virus
 location, files you can delete, and file errors.
 Archiving, covering some of the more common
 programs used and basic backup strategies.
 Additionally some techniques will be discussed for
 files you download from the BBS or Internet.
Prerequisites: Must be familiar with Windows.

NEW!

Note: This course is a companion to the Using the
 BBS course.

How to buy a computer \$10/\$60

Members: \$10. Non-members: \$60 (includes first
 year's subscription).
Tom Coleman
 6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 29 Aug.
 10.30 am–1.30 pm, Sun 21 Sep.
 What a computer does, what the jargon means,
 buying advice, tips and traps, no sales talk!
Prerequisites: None.

Hardware upgrade and repairs \$45

Tom Coleman
 6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 15 Aug.
 6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Thu 25 Sep.
 Students will be able to dismantle and
 re-assemble a computer, replace major
 components, be aware of the basic "rules" and
 conventions of computer building and know
 enough to get started on simple jobs.
Prerequisites: Familiarity with the basic
 functions of each of a computer's parts.

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 Administration Office
 2nd Floor
 66 Albert Road
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 Ph: (03) 9699 6222
 Fax: (03) 9699 6499



Corel Super Putt

GAME REVIEW

Bob Burt



Appearing in the Corel CD HOME series, this 3D mini-putt game is very suitable for all the family as it has lively sound, bright and interesting graphics and easily understood playing procedures. Although the playing requirements are easily grasped, the novel hazards created for the three different 9-hole courses ensure that each hole provides a new challenge. Up to four people can play and with a full complement of participants the game

not only requires great skill to win, but also provides great entertainment. I must admit to reaching the Mercy Rule limit of six strokes per hole on several occasions during my tentative introductory forays, which of course provides considerable amusement for one's opponents.

Appropriate sound effects greet the six stroke limit being reached, adding to the player's dismay.

The game is designed for the new breed of PCs. You must have a fast processor—a Pentium or 686 is essential to provide smooth action and transitions.

You must first set up Super Putt under Win 95, which does not use up a large amount of disk space, but the CD-ROM must be in place at all times during play.

The three 9-hole courses are named Traditional, Classical and Water Park. There is also a 3-hole practising course for good measure. I don't know what rules were followed in the original design of the features, but they all appear to be quite innovative to me. However, I have not had the advantage of actually playing on a "real" mini-putt course, so it is all rather new to me. Each hole contains a range of hazards, including bumps, indents, tricky angles and moving obstacles and each has a unique shape.

Play, using the mouse, is simple. You click to drop the ball on the *tee off* strip, then line up your shot by clicking and

dragging to point the cross-hairs toward the hole. You increase the power used to strike the ball by increasing the length of the direction line in front of it. Your shot commences as soon as you release the mouse button. After all players have completed their strokes, the furthest from the hole shoots first, while for a new hole, the player with the lowest score of the previous hole takes the first stroke. Who makes the opening shot on the first hole? Simple: the person whose name is highlighted in the list of competing players.

As you would expect, scores are faithfully recorded and the high scores

an excellent

game requiring

development

of skill

Info Box

Corel Super Putt

Minimum system requirements

- IBM-compatible PC with a Pentium P60 CPU
- Windows 95
- 800 x 600 graphics with 256 colours
- 8 MB memory
- 4 MB free hard disk space
- Double speed CD-ROM drive
- 8-bit Sound Blaster or 100% compatible sound card
- Windows-compatible mouse

Availability and cost

Major software retailers
Price currently not available



Figure 1. Introductory screen



Figure 2. The setup categories in a novel display



Figure 3. Opening view of Traditional Hole #2



Figure 4. Putting view of Traditional Hole #2

be displayed as required. The ninth hole has an interesting scoring feature. A stroke is subtracted for completing the hole, so if you achieved a magical hole-in-one, you would score zero. Super Putt can support network play. There are two general choices here. The first entails the use of a modem, a telephone line and an established network protocol such as TCP/IP or IPX, while the second requires a connection to a LAN (local area network) in an office, school

or college. In either instance, you can play a network game using your computer as the Server (creating a game), or you can join an existing network game as a Guest (client). If you are setting up as Server, you sign in as First Player, whereas a Guest would use the second, third or fourth player box. You then choose the connection mechanism—*Modem Connection* for a telephone line or either *Winsock IPX* or *Winsock TCP* for a LAN. Of course, the protocol you select

must already be installed. If you are playing as Server, you must then wait for all your guests to connect, while if you are a Guest, a *Select Game Session* dialog box lists any games you may join and you make your choice. All players must also keep their own CD-ROM in the drive during connection and play, of course.

So there we have it. An excellent game requiring development of skills and with the capacity to maintain interest, particularly when four people are playing. □

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Morris Tobias has been a member and long-time supporter of Melb PC since 1987. Hundreds of members have benefitted from his expertise.



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Corel Print and Photo House

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bernadette Houghton



Corel Print and Photo House (CPPH) is a simple, cheap and fun graphics package. If you have only an occasional need for graphics or don't need the power of a full-featured program, CPPH may suit you. Aimed at home and small business users, the package includes a mammoth collection of templates and sample files; if you're a little artistically challenged like me, you'll definitely appreciate this.

To toss around a few statistics, CPPH has

- 1600 samples (running the gamut of cards, labels, calendars, business stationery, menus and so on)
- 1000 photos
- 1000 phrases
- 150 fonts
- 7000 clipart images
- 200 backdrops
- 70 borders
- A range of templates based on PaperDirect paper designs.

Whenever I read such wondrous statistics, I can't help feeling that I'm getting a

good deal—Corel surely has some wily marketing experts! Even so, CPPH is an easy-to-use program that you can quickly re-learn if you haven't used it in a while.

CPPH includes two programs

- Corel Print House 2, a vector drawing program
- Corel Photo House, Corel's new bitmap-editing program.

While Print House on its own is a good product, the inclusion of Photo House rounds it out.

Corel Print House

Print House's main feature is the Notebook (Figures 1 and 2). This has two main functions: context-sensitive help for the current task, and visual catalogues of ready-made images and styles that you can drag and drop onto your drawing. You can also add your own styles (colouring, line, shape, shadow and text) and images. Although the Notebook remains visible at all times, you can work directly with Print House's tools, or use Wizards to take you through specific tasks (Figures 3 and 4). If you get lost at any point or are unsure what to do next, the Key icon on the toolbar will return you to the first page of the Notebook; from here you can get your bearings once again. The online help is also quite good and expands on the Notebook's context-sensitive assistance.

Print House's drawing tools include Text, Freehand, Rectangle, Ellipse, Polygon and Table, as well as a powerful Shaper, with which you can manipulate objects as Bezier curves. While the tools

are few in number, you can manipulate them in various ways for different effect: a quick glance at the Notebook will tell you the possibilities of your current tool. Once you've drawn your objects, you can colour, rotate, stack, align and perform most other basic drawing operations on them.

Other highlights include the ability to perform mail merges using Print House's Namelist databases, and video paper-folding demonstrations. If you're familiar with Print House from earlier versions, you'll be interested in the new features of version 2. These include the ability to mould text and bitmaps into shapes, a new Fit Text to Path command and colourful new rainbow fills. There is also a new Align and Distribute command for arranging objects, support for continuous feed paper, and enhanced Table and Namelist features.

Corel Photo House

If you're not familiar with bitmap-editing software, you may be wondering what you can do with Photo House. A few ideas

- Convert a colour photo to greyscale, then colour it again to get a hand-painted effect
- Add deceased Uncle Joe to the family group photo
- Change Uncle Mick's sober black tie to a dashing rainbow hue
- Remove the rabbit ears from unsuspecting Auntie Myrtle
- Correct photo problems such as blurriness, red eyes and scratches

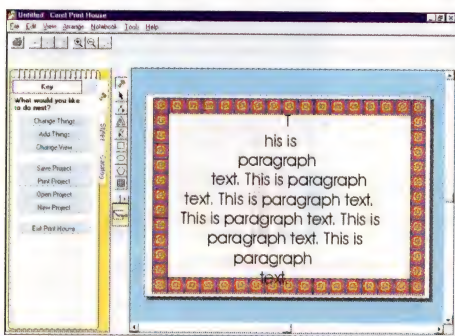


Figure 1. Print House's main screen, with the Notebook's first page

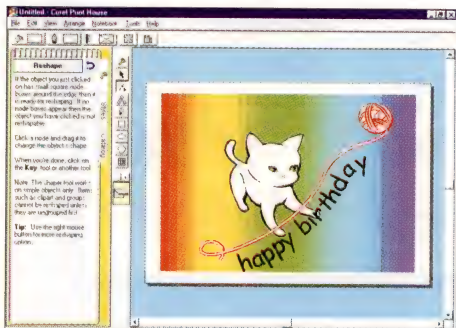


Figure 2. Typical Notebook help with Print

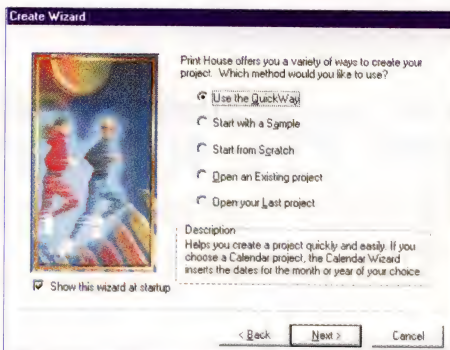


Figure 3. Creating a new project with the Create Wizard

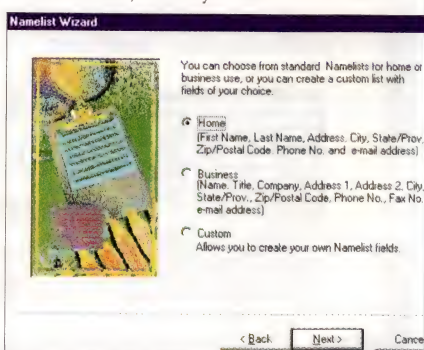


Figure 4. Using Print House's Namelist Wizard

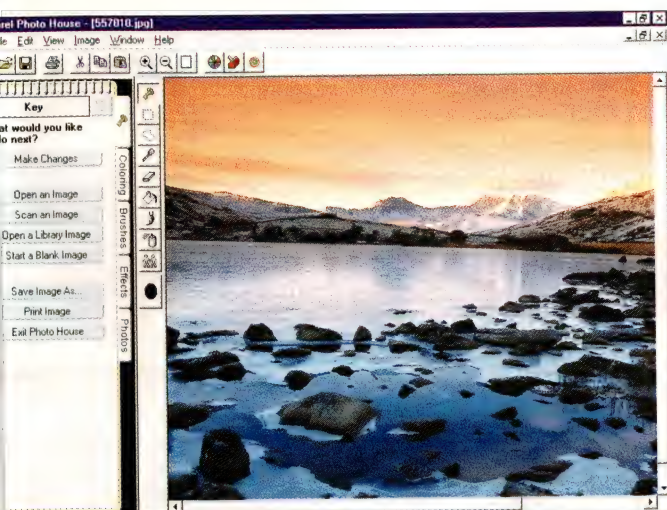


Figure 5. Photo House's main screen

Create your own bitmaps from scratch include your photos in your Print House projects. Photo House's interface is similar to Print House's, so if you're familiar with Print House you'll feel comfortable quickly—there is a similar Notebook, with a similar drag-and-drop interface and context-sensitive help (Figure 5). Photo House's analogues include Colours, Brushes, Effects and Photos. The tools are Eye-dropper (which enables you to select a colour from your image), Eraser, Flood, Brush, Spray Can and Clone (which enables you to duplicate part of an image). For each tool you can adjust the brush type, size, angle, transparency, feathering and ink flow rate (Figure 6). Unlike vector-based drawing programs, which require you to select **objects** to work on, bitmap-editing programs like Photo House require you to select **areas**. You can work on a whole image, but you often you want to constrain your changes to a particular area; good selection tools are therefore important. Photo House has two selection tools: Lasso and Freehand. Unfortunately,

these tools are quite tricky; if you make a mistake, for instance, you must start all over again—you can't simply adjust the selected area.

Photo House's retouching tools include Sharpen, Remove Dust and Scratches, Brightness/Contrast, Reduce Speckles, Remove Red Eyes, Replace Colours and Simplify Colours (Figure 7). A useful online Photo Retouching Guide advises you which of these tools to use for specific problems, and how to use them. There are also 14 special effects, including Sketch, Psychedelic, Page Curl and Emboss (Figure 8).

What you see on Photo House's screen is basically what you get. All tools and effects are directly accessible either from the Notebook or the toolbars; you don't have to use the menus at all. There are no toolbar flyouts, the tools and dialog boxes are very simple, and you can preview effects before applying them. Despite Photo House's simplicity, you can definitely create some very smart—and fun—effects. You do need to cultivate a keen eye and steady hand, though, for good area selection.

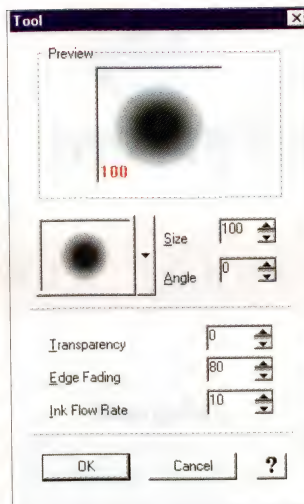


Figure 6. Customising Photo House's tools

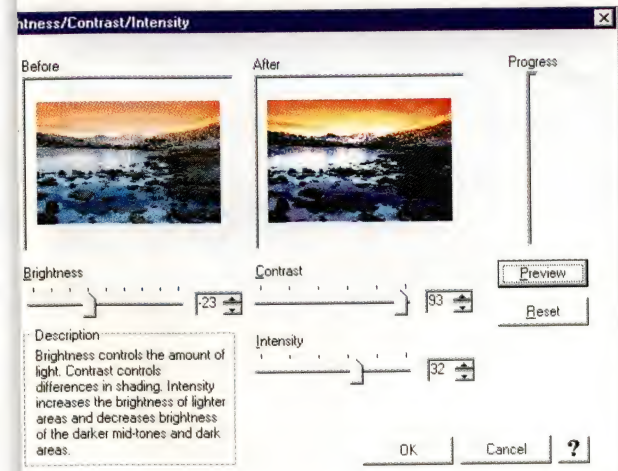


Figure 7. Adjusting brightness/contrast/intensity with Photo House

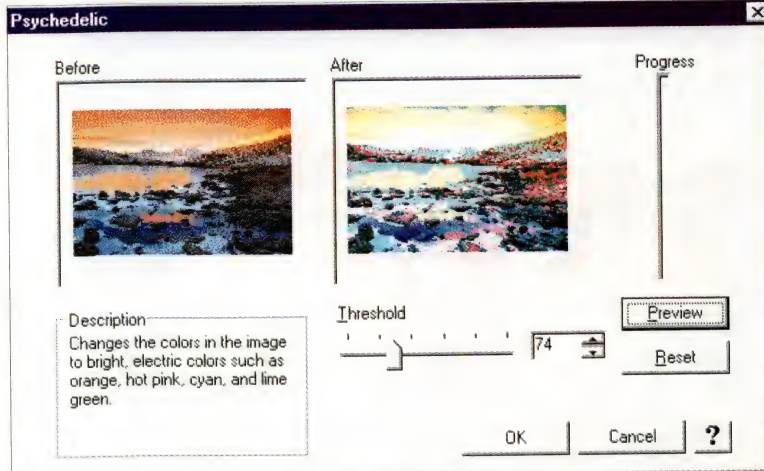


Figure 8. Applying a special effect with Photo House

Info Box

Corel Print and Photo House

Minimum system requirements

- 486 DX-33 processor
- Windows 95 or Windows NT
- 8 MB RAM (Win95) or 12 MB RAM (Win NT 3.51+)
- CD-ROM drive
- VGA card and monitor
- Mouse or tablet
- 28 MB free disk space.

Availability and cost

Available from most Corel retailers, including Harvey Norman, Brashs and Myer. If you can't find it, contact Corel Customer Service Centre on 1 800 658 850.

RRP: \$99

Assessment

CPH is easy—and great fun—to use. To get the full benefit, it's best (but not essential) to have a colour printer. Apart from some minor quirks (and a major shortcoming with the Photo House selection tools), CPH works well. There are plenty of sample files which you can use as they are, or change to suit yourself. Many of the samples are nothing special, but there are a few real gems. Print House and Photo House complement each other well, and there are enough features to allow you to create some powerful effects—but not so many that you'll be overwhelmed. On the whole, a terrific program for the occasional or novice user.

Church Membership Management System

SOFTWARE REVIEW



Bob Burt

powerful ministry management and pastoral care program

This review will interest two groups of people. First, the Church Membership Management System (CMMS) is a comprehensive database system designed to handle people-based data recording for churches of virtually any denomination. Therefore it should attract the attention of vestry members and other church-goers keenly concerned with what is usually termed *Pastoral Care*. Second, because this specialised database was created with Microsoft FoxPro, it should interest a wider audience. The product assures prospective designers that in capable hands, FoxPro can be used to develop powerful and reliable databases with special attributes.

Background

The Christian Radio Missionary Fellowship first wrote CMMS, as a DOS program, specifically for a Baptist church in Blackburn. Word spread and other churches persuaded the author, Robin Cole, to make it user-definable and therefore suitable for other denominations. Additional sales across most of the major denominations soon followed.

This, the sixth version of CMMS, is now a Windows-based product.

The package

The program is installed from a set of four 3.5-inch disks. Two blank disks are also provided for data backup.

A substantial ring binder stores the disks and also holds the *Installation and Tutorial Manual*, the *Operator's Manual* and a *Report Writer Tutorial*. A seventh disk contains tutorial data. An illustrated brochure outlines the main features of the program and the support available for it.

The tutorial

The author has recognised that CMMS will be used by a range of people, most of whom will not be particularly familiar with database usage. So the tutorial contains 37 pages of step-by-step instructions on entering and editing data, and printing standard reports. The easy to follow steps enable new users to

begin entering "real" data for their church records with some confidence.

If you wish to make the tutorial available to another person, you can *restore* the original data from the tutorial disk.

The *Report Writer Tutorial* provides instructions for you to develop your own reports, although 130 are already defined for you and most of these can also be modified.

General description

CMMS currently uses 26 permanent database tables (and two temporary ones) and 40 index files. It has over 300 fields and more than 130 screens are available. The maximum number of records available for people is 89999 and a similar maximum applies to addresses. Some records, such as ministry and occupation codes, are virtually unlimited. The most restrictive are role, event and visitation codes (around 60 each).

Entry to CMMS is protected by a password—you change the default "admin" to a password of your own choice. The main screen has large buttons for quick access to the ten main data screens or the printing and mail merge features. The *People Data Manager* screen provides the major starting point, as it provides access to most Person and Address data. The brochure includes an illustration of this screen with description boxes linked by arrows pointing to its major features

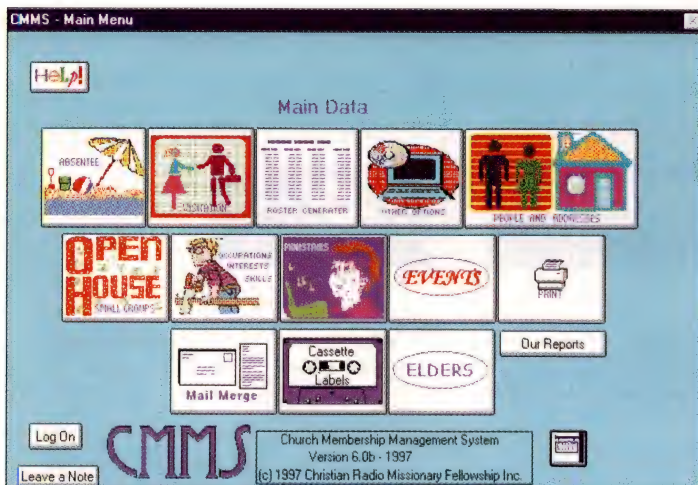


Figure 1. CMMS Main menu

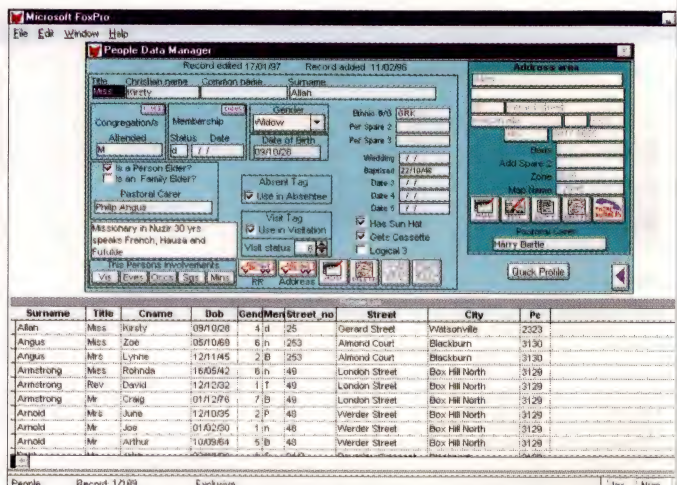


Figure 2. The People Data manager

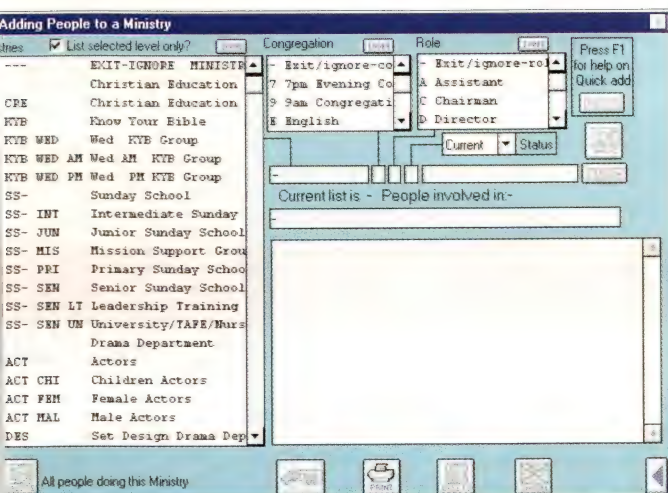


Figure 3. Adding people to a ministry

is provides a useful overview. The online help gives you further guidance. You can even print additional copies of the manual, if so required.

Preparing the database

After installation, CMMS holds 189 dummy records, which you use as the starting point for the tutorial. On completion of the tutorial you need to clean out the database to prepare it for your own church records. The instructions include a means of deleting all records at once to give you a clean start, but you could easily do this, as I did, as it is embedded as 21.3.1 in the body of the *Operator's Manual*. Once you find them, the instructions are easy to follow. You simply click the *Other Options* button, then select *Data Management*. That displays a new screen, from which you click on *Remove Tutorial Data*.

After removal, a screen display then informs you to see Section 15.11 in the *Operator's Manual* for your next steps. However, the sections move from 15.8.6 to 16 in both the manual and the online help, so those instructions remain a mystery. In practice, you would simply

start to enter your preferred terminology into the setup screens, enter your codes for membership and congregations and enter your role codes, all of which are clearly explained in the documentation. For this review, it suffices to explain that changing the setup screens enables you to use your usual "church" terms for membership such as *elders*, *small groups*, *congregation*, *zone* and the *spare* fields. You might, for example, change *small groups* to *home groups*, *fellowship groups* or *cells*.

Using CMMS

Naturally, a new operator will require a little time to become familiar with the database, but the steps are developed logically and the program is robust. So much help is provided that a learner's progress should be quite rapid, but if needed, special training sessions are on offer at modest cost.

Conclusion

CMMS is a powerful and ably supported ministry management and pastoral care program. It should interest church groups looking for a suitable computer-based recording and report system.

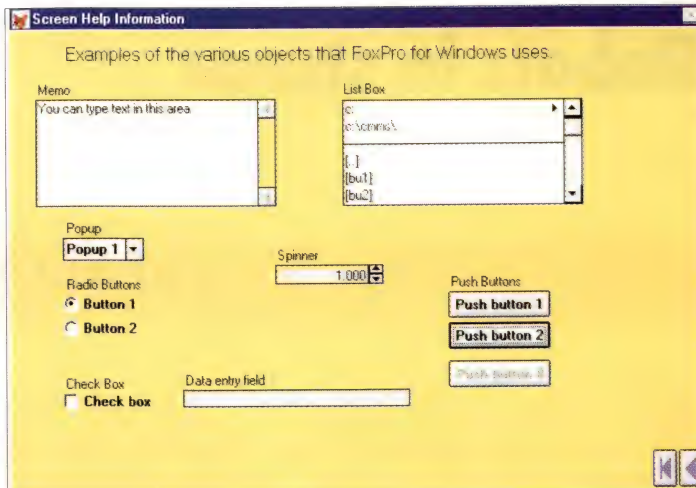


Figure 4. Objects used by FoxPro

Info Box

Church Membership Management System v6.0b

Minimum system requirements

- IBM PC or compatible, preferably a 486DX or higher
- Windows 3.1+ or Windows 95
- 3.5-inch disk drive
- Hard disk with at least 10 MB spare space

Availability and cost

Available from
Christian Radio Missionary Fellowship Inc.
PO Box 46
Blackburn South VIC 3130
Ph: (03) 9890 2338
Fax: (03) 9899 1921
e-mail: crmj@melbourne.dialix.oz.au
RRP: \$200
Additional manual: \$25
Update from CMMS for DOS: \$50

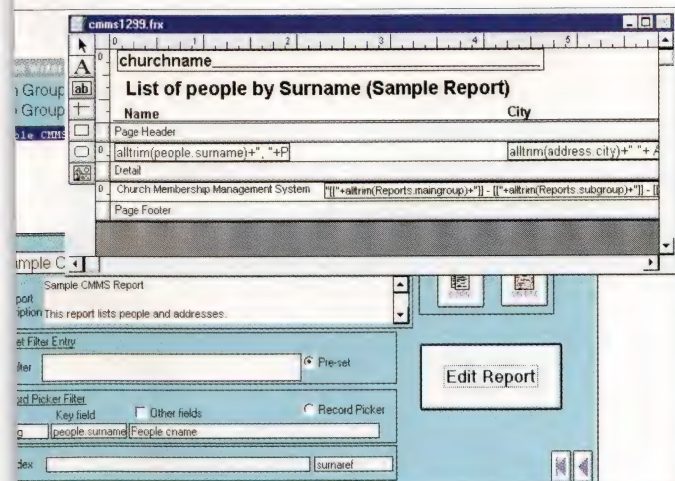


Figure 5. Editing a report

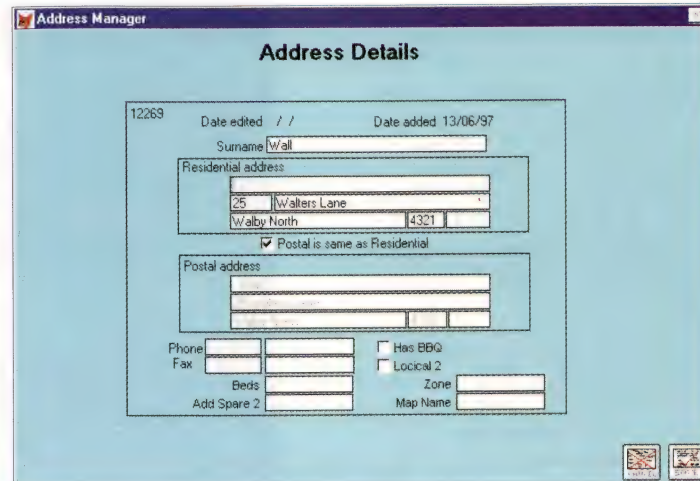


Figure 6. The Address manager

Robots in stereo

DOUBLE TROUBLE

Ken Holm

In November 1995, ROBOTS3D.LZH was put on the BBS. It was a version meant to be viewed with red/green goggles to see various animated stick-figure animals(?) in stereo. As it was essentially a C++ programming exercise (to keep me off the streets), it was placed in the programming file area. I don't know how many of the 100-odd downloaders were interested in the C++ code included with the .EXE file, but hope they found running the latter to be fun.

This version is meant for use with the old mirror trick. It allows the robots to be colour coded and have black shadows, on a ground plane, which serves to define it without needing to draw "scenery" on it. They are still wire frame models making no claims to realism, but they are mesmerising and you can control their modes of activity, so they do seem to acquire a modicum of personality. ROBOTS3D.LZH is now on the BBS in the games area as it contains only the .EXE file and a text file you can print out, to help with the keystrokes to get the most out of the program. The C++ code differs mainly in the calculations for the display; anyone interested in it is welcome to contact me.

Dramatis personae

By using Class objects in C++, we may have as many clones as we wish, but have settled for eight Robobugs, eight Robobats and four Robopedes. As you may note, the Robobug is a six-legged, camel-like insect of ungainly gait and peculiar habits, plodding doggedly around a circuit of eight targets—until you interrupt him/her/it. You can make any of them do a double shuffle, reverse, divert to a different target or circle around a single target. The 20-legged Robopede (twentipede) has a sinusoidally undulating motion on rippling legs and is content to crawl around a circuit of the targets or, alternately, vainly try to follow one of the Robobugs. Both will find their way through the gaps between the row of square obstacles.

The fundamental method of control is to nominate the target for each animal; this may be either a fixed

target or a moving one, i.e. another animal. As they approach a fixed target, they are switched to the next one around the circuit. Now we come to the stars of the show, the Robobats, da-daah; they can be switched to 14 different modes of activity. They will happily cruise the circuit, swooping down on each target and climbing to cruising altitude in between. When a Robobug is allotted as a target for a Robobat, it is constantly hassled by swooping attacks and tight circling returns. If two, three or four bats are targeted on each other in an endless loop, they settle down to a stable circle—which can be distorted by varying the speeds of individuals. If the leading bat is given a fixed target on the ground, it will circle it and the others will fall in neatly behind in echelon formation—rather unconventional behaviour for bats, you will agree. By targeting all followers directly onto the leader, with various speed control and lateral displacement regimes, we can get formation flying in Vee, diamond, broad arrow and Y (sharp arrow).

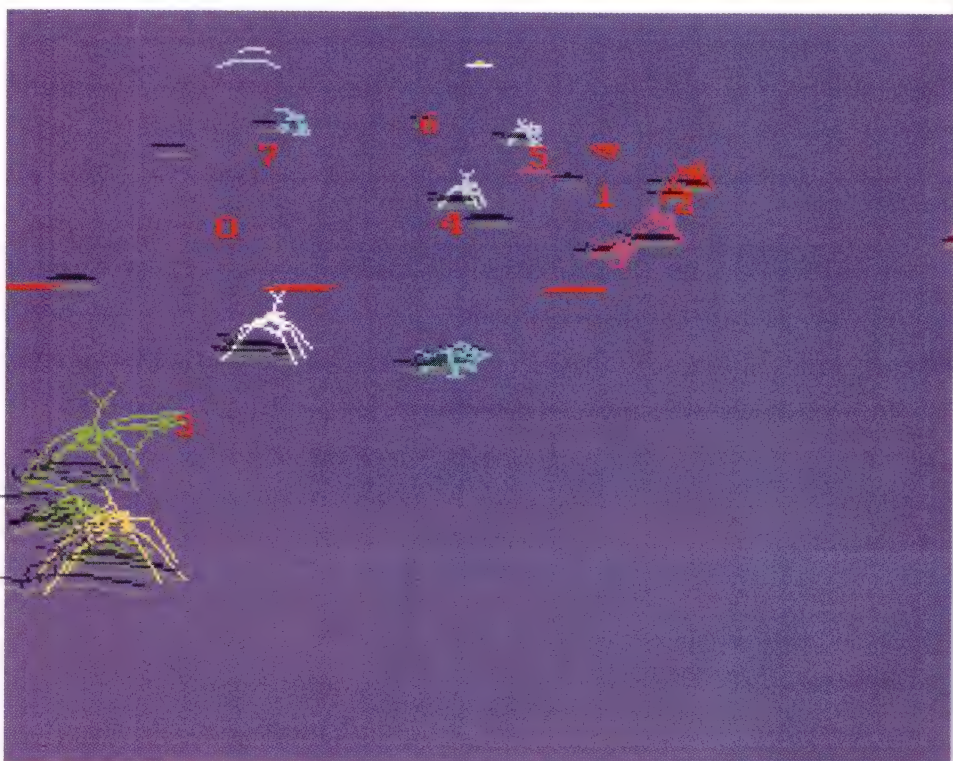
With variations

The action may be seen from two different viewpoints

- a fixed point whence all may be seen
- a point above and behind the leading bat; a single key toggles between the at any time.

The second is more fun, particularly when the bat is hassling a bug—the tight circles will make you dizzy. Also is better for viewing the formation flying. The speed of the leader may be varied to make it fly sedately behind its bug; can hover, or fly backwards if you insist. Reducing its speed in formations will confuse the followers and break up the formation but they will (usually) re-form if speed is restored.

There are a few other variables not mentioned here. With permutations and combinations, it could tempt you to while away some of your valuable time. You may even be inspired to extend the code to your taste.





Address Book 4.0 for Windows

SOFTWARE REVIEW

Bob Burt

a neat and handy Personal Information Manager

ing the mirror

see the picture in true 3D, you need mirror, held vertically, facing left with left edge up the centreline of the picture and the surface at right angles to page. Put the tip of your nose on far (from page) edge of the mirror; your right eye looks past the back of the mirror at the right side of the page; your left eye ignores the left of the page but looks at its reflection in the mirror—it, of course, appears on the right side. The effects on the right will appear in 3D stereo since each eye is seeing the view calculated for it. The left eye view was calculated for the right side but mirrored and plotted on the left—the mirror reflection returns it to its proper place.

Here we have a neat and handy Personal Information Manager (PIM). Like most PIMs, it is centred around a file called an *Address Book*, in this case, one you can display in a browser window. You add individual address listings and other personal information to the address book file by calling up *Address!Add* from the menu bar or by clicking on the *Add Address* button. You can organise your information into groups, which you select or define yourself.

The dialog boxes used for data entry are very well designed for rapid and accurate completion. For example, tab dividers simplify the task of subdividing names and addresses into primary and secondary categories.

As you would expect, information can be easily found and sorted by name, title and post or zip code.

Records can be printed in various ways, including categorised address books and company telephone listings. A range of label and envelope printing formats is available. Records can be mail-merged with other documents generated by your word processor.

Address Book is equipped with an *Options Wizard*, which allows you to

customise the information displayed in the Preview box. Using the Wizard, you can also customise address or card lists.

Telephone calls can be made by first entering the required number in the small telephone dialog box. This way, Address Book keeps track of all such phone calls in the call log. Notes can be made during or after each call to complete the records to your satisfaction.

The "bonus software" on the CD-ROM, the *1-800 Directory* is likely to be of very limited use to Australian users. It is the AT&T listing of over 100,000 toll-free business telephone numbers in the United States, in over 3000 categories. Unfortunately, the "toll-free" element does not apply to calls from Australia. Similarly, within Address Book, the Postnet bar coding available to print Zip/Postal code on labels and envelopes will not be useful outside the USA. Fortunately the remainder of the program is functionally relevant to Australian practice.

Info Box

**Parsons Technology
Address Book 4.0 for Windows**

Availability and cost

Price not available at time of printing, the US price is US\$19

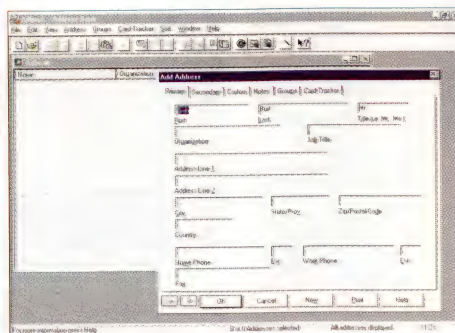


Figure 1. Adding an address

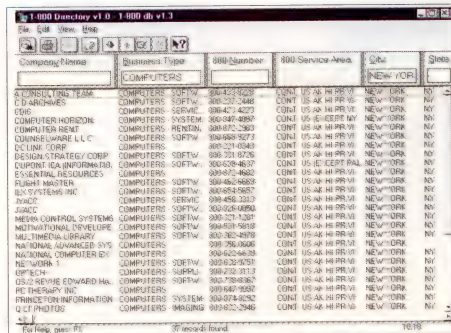


Figure 2. Searching the 1-800 directory

GAME REVIEW

Bernadette Houghton



Luna Ticks is an action-strategy game which can be pretty much what you want it to be. You have purchased a mining franchise from MegaBucks Corp, and must mine and

process the ore and make regular loan repayments. From time to time, you'll need to replenish your fuel and power, and you can also purchase various weapons and defence items, upgrade your Tick (mining vehicle) and obtain useful mining paraphernalia.

You can play Luna Ticks on your own, collecting and processing the ore in a serenity marred only by MegaBucks coming to collect its payment. Or you can choose to play against up to seven opponents, either humans or computer opponents called Robo-Ticks. Robo-Ticks can be boring and predictable, sly and cunning or ferocious killers; there are eight distinct personalities, and you choose the personality of each Robo-Tick. Two human players can play in serial mode, with the other player slots filled by Robo-Ticks if desired. Up to 8 human players can participate over an IPX network.

If you choose to play against others (humans or Robo-Ticks), things can become totally frenetic. Players frantically try to mine and process the ore and be first to pay off their debts to MegaBucks. At the same time, they have to contend with their opponents stealing and destroying their items and trying to kill them. Of course, you'll be right there in the thick of things, stealing and destroying with the best of them. While all this is going on, you'll have to defend your base and continue mining the ore—if you don't have any payment ready when MegaBucks comes, you'll be penalised

**strategy with
fast and
furious action**

and charged interest. Believe me, this debt soon mounts up! To add to the fun you can provoke your opponents into fighting each other. Once the first player has paid off his loan, a wormhole exit appears, and the players race to be first to discover the wormhole and exit the level.

Luna Ticks runs very well on my 486DX2/66 with 32 MB RAM. It took me a while to grasp the concept, though, and get into smooth playing mode. However, if you wish, a tutor will guide you for the first ten minutes of play. Navigation is quite tricky—the up or down arrow keys move your Tick backwards and forwards, and the left and right arrows turn it around. The screen shots in are from Manacomm; since Luna Ticks takes exclusive control of your computer for performance reasons, I couldn't get any of my own.

Luna Ticks should appeal to those who like strategy with fast and furious action.

Info Box

Luna Ticks

Minimum system requirements

- 486/33 (Pentium recommended)
- DOS 5.0
- 8 MB RAM
- VGA graphics
- CD-ROM drive
- Mouse

Availability and cost

Available at major game and educational software stockists, including Myer and Harvey Norman. You can also download a trial version from www.manac.com.au. Distributed by Manacomm
Ph: (03) 9569 6377
Fax: (03) 9569 9641
Shareware, registered version RRP \$39.95.
Classification: General (all ages)



Figure 1. Luna Ticks: your mining base



Figure 2. Selecting your Tick

Peter's PC Update Puzzle

WIN A FREE HOLIDAY

Peter Smith



These puzzles are designed to be solved without using a computer—if a bird-brain can write them, another bird-brain can solve them!

Solve the puzzle (you may use plain paper or a photocopy—you do not need to mutilate your *PC Update*) and send your entry to

Peter's PC Update Puzzle

August

PO Box 14

Ringwood VIC 3134

Entries arrive by Friday 29 August.

We'll publish the solution and the winner in the October *PC Update*.

Dingbats

A while ago I recall reading a story in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. I haven't seen it reported locally, nor do I remember it in detail, but it went something like this.

A major credit card company was signing up a new merchant, somewhere in far north Queensland. The agent mailed the the multi-page application form and asked the merchant to fax it back to Sydney.

The merchant wasn't technologically up-to-date and didn't own a fax. He used the next-door establishment's machine.

Next morning the credit card agent arrived in his Sydney office to find about a dozen copies of the multi-page application in his fax machine.

Somewhat worried, he rang the new merchant: "Was there a problem?"

The merchant was apologetic, he'd tried many times to send the fax, but the paper kept coming out the bottom of the machine, instead of going to Sydney.

Is this an urban myth or could it really happen north of the Murray? □

No, entries cannot be accepted by fax or e-mail; good old-fashioned snail-mail gives everyone an equal opportunity! Also please don't send entries to the Melb PC office—they are busy enough.

Prize

This month the prize is a free night's accommodation. Pam & Ron Scott are pleased to donate one night's accommodation for two people at their "**Quarter Deck**" B&B property in sunny **San Remo**.

Availability is, of course, subject to any prior bookings and would normally be outside of school and public holidays.

The views there are just great! And it's close to many tourist attractions. Just thge break you'll need after solving this puzzle!

Pam and Ron also offer a 20% discount to Melb PC members on B&B stays of two nights or more. See our discounts page for more details.

Duelling Dice

Five friends played a two-round game of dice to see who could throw the highest total. Each threw one die in each round. Can you work out who threw what, and in which order?

1. In round one everything but a three was thrown.
2. In round two everything but a four was thrown.
3. No-one scored a total of six.
4. Edward was allowed to keep score, even though he was playing.
5. The second player to throw had the lowest total, his first throw was a two.
6. Charles threw directly after David.
7. The first to throw didn't score a six.
8. Barry's total was 11.
9. The player who went third, didn't throw a five the first time.
10. The player who threw a four didn't throw an odd number in his other turn.
11. Andrew went fourth.
12. The fifth player scored seven. □

Answer Grid

Duelling Dice

Order	First
Round One	
Round Two	
Player	
Order	Second
Round One	
Round Two	
Player	
Order	Third
Round One	
Round Two	
Player	
Order	Fourth
Round One	
Round Two	
Player	
Order	Fifth
Round One	
Round Two	
Player	

Prizes needed

We are coming to the end of the prizes that have been donated. If you or your company could donate one or more prizes, for our puzzle fans, we'd be happy to acknowledge you on this page.

Please contact either Stan Johnstone or Peter Smith (contact details on pages 2 and 3 of this magazine.) □

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



John Swale

Answers received

From Keith Saunders re restarting Window 95 from the Shut Down menu causing lockup. I'm not 100% sure what information is required but Windows 95 will start from DOS on my PC when I type WIN. Also when the screen shows "It's now safe to turn your computer off" my PC reboots if I type Ctrl+Alt+Del. I would be happy to talk to the questioner and I can be contacted via the BBS.

Pat O'Sullivan suggests using XTLINK.COM that comes as part of XTree Gold for DOS to transfer files between PCs. It can be set up for serial or printer port link. Define one PC as the master and the other as slave and use a file manager to do the transfer. [JS: In the July PC Update George Skarbek wrote a review of a program DriveCopy. This can be used to do the transfer if you can get the two drives in the one PC for the transfer.]

Last month there was a solution to the backup of the registry files. On the CD-ROM there is a file called ERU.EXE (Emergency Recovery Utility) which can be used instead.

From Ben Sowden (b_sowden@gold.iap.net.au) Re the Drivespace Warning screen "The Drivespace VxD and the Drivespace real mode drive are mismatched". What he needs to do is Date check the DBLSPACE.BIN and DRVSPACE.BIN to ensure the files have a date after 1996. If not, he has to get a copy of the files from a friend with Windows 95. Windows 95 stuffs up if you re-install it with this error—I know from bad experiences. [JS: I also had another call suggesting that this can be caused by First Aid and the solution is to Deltree Windows 95 and reinstall.]

JS: I have just downloaded HyperTerminal Personal Edition V3 from the BBS and the online Help states—"HyperTerminal does not have a 'Host Mode' so the connection must

be made manually". The Read Me file indicates that the commercial version, HyperACCESS, has scripting and the ability to set up to easily exchange files with your friends. So you will need to upgrade to HyperACCESS or set up manually for host type connection.

Questions and answers

Q We were told during the Internet training seminar that the user group had arranged for a version of Netscape to be available free to members. What was the version?

A Netscape Version 3.01.

Q I have seen a lot of disturbing information on the "Year 2000" problem. Can you give any information on studies conducted on the impact on individuals as distinct from corporations?

A 1: There was an article on this topic by George Skarbek in *The Age* a few months ago. Mainframes are the area of biggest concern. For PCs the main concern is with the real-time clock that may not be accurate on old systems. Windows 95 and NT have fixes for clock problems but old DOS and Windows 3.x with old BIOSes may have problems. There are internet sites with fixes for various BIOS versions. To test the clock, remove any automatically started programs from your AUTOEXEC.BAT file and set the date and time to 31/12/99 23:58. Turn your PC off, leave for five minutes, turn it on again and check the date. Applications usually have the dates in four-digit year format so will be all right. Even programs such as old dBASE ones could be OK if they have set Century On. Some database systems such as dBASE may have instructions to "delete records more than x years old". This could cause records to be deleted if the dates are incorrect. There will be few people running DOS in 2000 so the problem should be minimised as people upgrade their PCs.

A 2: I have come across a problem with a mailing list program that deleted people from the list when their subscriptions were paid in advance to 2000 or beyond. The program thought they were only paid to 1900 so did not send their magazines. [JS: This indicates one area you need to check. The underlying application dBASE, Excel etc may be compliant but, if there is programming in the form of functions, macros, etc, that extracts and uses the two-digit year, then there may be potential problems.]

Q When I turn my modem on and then my computer, Windows 95 thinks it has found a new modem and wants to install it even though it is already installed. If I let it do the install, the same thing still happens next time I switch on.

A This is sometimes caused by communication port problems.

Q My daughter purchased an educational version of Lotus SmartSuite but it will not load the spell checker.

A The education version installs the US spell checker by default so you have to do a custom install. This will be changed in SmartSuite 97.

Q What is the capacity of the Recycle bin and how do I empty it?

A The Recycle bin is just another folder on your hard disk so the capacity is limited by your hard disk size. Empty the folder by opening the folder in Explorer and using File/Empty Recycle Bin to delete all items or just delete the individual items.

Q Does Visual Basic 5 allow you to use the same DLLs and VBXs as version 3 without recompiling the DLLs and VBXs?

A Visual Basic 5, Office 97 and some other software overwrite the old DLLs. So much of your old software may not work. If you use 16-bit DLLs from VB 3 then you should be all right as the DLLs are separate. VB will not co-exist as the 32-bit DLLs are used in both.

Unanswered questions

Q Keith Saunders: I have recently installed Panasonic CD-ROM on my 486 PC. The proprietary Windows 95 drivers seem to work satisfactorily. Do I need the drivers supplied on the disk that came with the unit? Also, on the first start-up screen I get a message "System board device resource conflict". I have been told to disable the BIOS. Is this correct, and how is it done?

Q Steven Galavodas asks—How do I animate the desktop icons? I saw some animated icons at Myer but was not able to determine how it was done. I have downloaded ICONANI files and have tried to make the My Computer icon animate but it won't create a shortcut. It allows me to change the icon to an animated one but then when I apply it, it stays still as a basic shortcut icon. Can anyone help me?

Over to You

Please contact me if you have any comments on the answers given; can provide a reply for the unanswered questions; or if you cannot attend the monthly meeting and would like a question asked and included in this column.

To contact me: write to me care of the office; leave a message on the BBS or telephone me on (03) 9857 5567 AH or e-mail me at jswale@mellbpc.org.au

Note: Please contact commercial distributors before asking a question here. In all cases mention version numbers.

Keith Saunders would like a list of things to do and things not to do when formatting the C: drive.

I downloaded a communications program ICQ and tried to register it using the ICQ Wizard. At the end it is supposed to give me a universal internet number. However it flagged it as an error saying "Check the status of the internet connection and if behind a firewall check the firewall settings". Has anyone had this problem and got a solution?

I use Norton Navigator to provide multiple desktops under Windows 95. Occasionally if I switch off and then on again, my carefully arranged desktop goes back to the Microsoft default. I have settings for no autoarrange, and no save settings in the Registry. So why is this happening?

I have Windows 95 Release 2 Revision 3 and when installing some programs such as Microsoft Office 97 it has problems with the Registry and states an unexpected error has occurred. I have searched through the Registry and the keys are in a foreign language, which seems to be Hungarian! Does anyone know why—because Microsoft don't? (The system region is set for Australia as I know that an incorrect setting of this can cause some of the problems that people have with spelling and thesaurus.)

Recently my Windows 95 desktop stopped allowing me to move the existing shortcuts around or moving new shortcuts to the desktop. Whenever I try this type of move, as soon as the cursor is over the desktop it is replaced by a stop sign (a circle with a diagonal line through it). What could have caused this, and how do I get things back the way they were?

Acknowledgments

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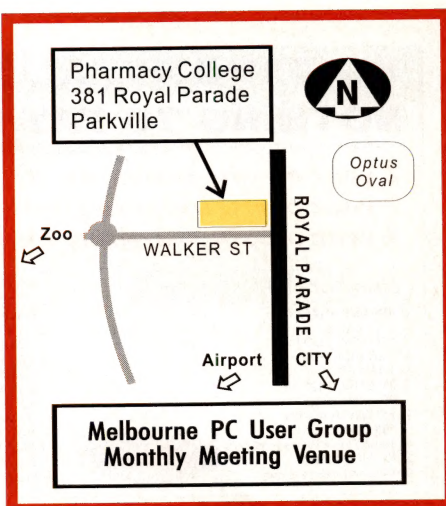
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Symantec Australia for contributions and support over many years. □



Monthly meeting
All members and guests
welcome

Pharmacy College
381 Royal Parade
Parkville

6.00 pm
First Wednesday
each month except
January

An average of over 500 members and guests attend our monthly meetings, which provide an excellent forum to introduce and release new products to those who are both users and decision makers. Meetings are arranged around planned themes. Members or presenters who are able to assist or contribute are invited to contact the convener.

Stan Johnstone Meetings convener
and administrator
Phone: (03) 9578 3091 BH
e-mail stanj@melbpc.org.au

6 August The Age CitySearch—a new online product created by John Fairfax Holdings and BIG Colour Pages to provide online community information in Australia
and Waypoint 1—a new interactive multimedia CD-ROM product from the Museum of Victoria.

Plus:

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- Don't forget the Waffle SIG after the meeting.

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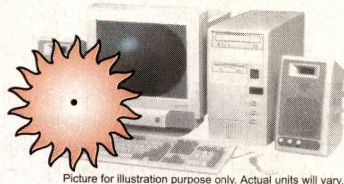
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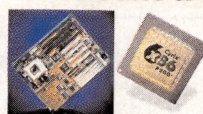
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